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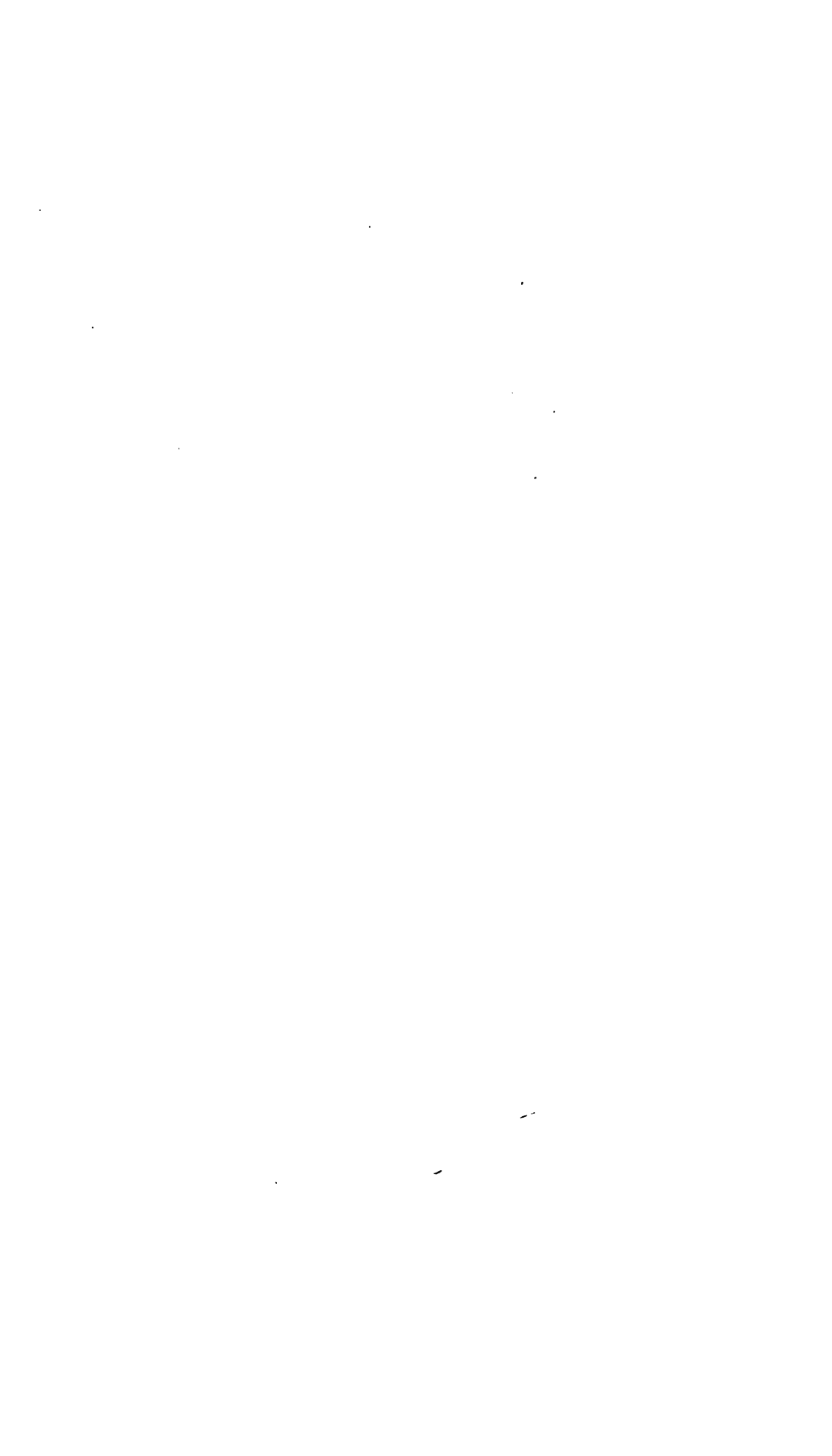
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SKETCHES AND STUDIES
IN
SOUTHERN EUROPE

BY
JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS
AUTHOR OF "STUDIES OF THE GREEK POETS" ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES
Vol. I.

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE
1880



SALMONS AND STUDIES

SOUTHERN EUROPE

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

SENIOR LECTURER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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THE CORNICE.

It was a dull afternoon in February when we left Nice and drove across the mountains to Mentone. Over hill and sea hung a thick mist. Turbia's Roman tower stood up in cheerless solitude, wreathed round with driving vapor, and the rocky nest of Esa seemed suspended in a chaos between sea and sky. Sometimes the fog broke and showed us Villafranca, lying green and flat in the deep blue below; sometimes a distant view of higher peaks swam into sight from the shifting cloud. But the whole scene was desolate. Was it for this that we had left our English home, and travelled from London day and night? At length we reached the edge of the cloud, and jingled down by Roccabruna and the olive-groves, till one by one Mentone's villas came in sight, and at last we found ourselves at the inn door. That night, and all next day and the next night, we heard the hoarse sea beat and thunder on the beach. The rain and wind kept driving from the south, but we consoled ourselves with thinking that the orange-trees and every kind of flower were drinking in the moisture and waiting to rejoice in sunlight which would come.

It was a Sunday morning when we woke and found that the

rain had gone, the sun was shining brightly on the sea, and a clear north wind was blowing cloud and mist away. Out upon the hills we went, not caring much what path we took; for everything was beautiful, and hill and vale were full of garden walks. Through lemon-groves—pale, golden, tender trees—and olives, stretching their gray boughs against the lonely cottage tiles, we climbed, until we reached the pines and heath above. Then I knew the meaning of Theocritus for the first time. We found a well, broad, deep, and clear, with green herbs growing at the bottom, a runlet flowing from it down the rocky steps, maidenhair, black adiantum, and blue violets hanging from the brink and mirrored in the water. This was just the well in *Hylas*. Theocritus has been badly treated. They call him a court poet, dead to Nature, artificial in his pictures. Yet I recognized this fountain by his verse, just as if he had showed me the very spot. Violets grow everywhere, of every shade, from black to lilac. Their stalks are long, and the flowers “nod” upon them, so that I see how the Greeks could make them into chaplets—how Lycidas wore his crown of white violets* lying by the fireside elbow-deep in withered asphodel, watching the chestnuts in the embers, and softly drinking deep healths to Ageanax far off upon the waves. It is impossible to go wrong in these valleys. They are cultivated to the height of about five hundred feet above the sea, in terraces laboriously built up with walls, earthed and manured, and irrigated by means of tanks and aqueducts. Above this level, where the virgin soil has not been yet reclaimed, or where the winds of winter bring down freezing currents from the mountains through a gap or gully of the lower hills, a tangled growth

* This begs the question whether *λευκόιον* does not properly mean snowflake, or some such flower. Violets in Greece, however, were often used for crowns: *ἰοστέφανος* is the epithet of Homer for Aphrodite, and of Aristophanes for Athens.

of heaths and arbutus and pines and rosemaries and myrtles continue the vegetation, till it finally ends in bare gray rocks and peaks some thousand feet in height. Far above all signs of cultivation on these arid peaks, you still may see villages and ruined castles, built centuries ago for a protection from the Moorish pirates. To these mountain fastnesses the people of the coast retreated when they descried the sails of their foes on the horizon. In Mentone, not very long ago, old men might be seen who in their youth were said to have been taken captive by the Moors; and many Arabic words have found their way into the patois of the people.

There is something strangely fascinating in the sight of these ruins on the burning rocks, with their black sentinel cypresses, immensely tall and far away. Long years and rain and sunlight have made these castellated eyries one with their native stone. It is hard to trace in their foundations where Nature's workmanship ends and where man's begins. What strange sights the mountain villagers must see! The vast blue plain of the unfurrowed deep, the fairy range of Corsica hung midway between the sea and sky at dawn or sunset, the stars so close above their heads, the deep dew-sprinkled valleys, the green pines! On penetrating into one of these hill-fortresses, you find that it is a whole village, with a church and castle and piazza, some few feet square, huddled together on a narrow platform. We met one day three mag-nates of Gorbio taking a morning stroll backwards and forwards, up and down their tiny square. Vehemently gesticulating, loudly chattering, they talked as though they had not seen each other for ten years, and were but just unloading their budgets of accumulated news. Yet these three men probably had lived, eaten, drunk, and talked together from the cradle to that hour: so true it is that use and custom quicken all our powers, especially of gossiping and scandal-mongering. St. Agnese is the highest and most

notable of all these villages. The cold and heat upon its absolutely barren rock must be alike intolerable. In appearance it is not unlike the Etruscan towns of Central Italy; but there is something, of course, far more imposing in the immense antiquity and the historical associations of a Narni, a Fiesole, a Chiusi, or an Orvieto. Sea-life and rusticity strike a different note from that of those Apennine-girdled seats of dead civilization, in which nations, arts, and religions have gone by and left but few traces—some wrecks of giant walls, some excavated tombs, some shrines, where monks still sing and pray above the relics of the founders of once world-shaking, now almost forgotten, orders. Here at Mentone there is none of this; the idyllic is the true note, and Theocritus is still alive.

We do not often scale these altitudes, but keep along the terraced glades by the side of olive-shaded streams. The violets, instead of peeping shyly from hedgerows, fall in ripples and cascades over mossy walls among maidenhair and spleenworts. They are very sweet, and the sound of trickling water seems to mingle with their fragrance in a most delicious harmony. Sound, smell, and hue make up one chord, the sense of which is pure and perfect peace. The country-people are kind, letting us pass everywhere, so that we make our way along their aqueducts and through their gardens, under laden lemon-boughs, the pale fruit dangling at our ears, and swinging showers of scented dew upon us as we pass. Far better, however, than lemon or orange trees, are the olives. Some of these are immensely old, numbering, it is said, five centuries, so that Petrarch may almost have rested beneath their shade on his way to Avignon. These veterans are cavernous with age: gnarled, split, and twisted trunks, throwing out arms that break into a hundred branches; every branch distinct, and feathered with innumerable sparks and spikelets of white, wavy, greenish light. These are the leaves, and the stems are gray with lichens.

The sky and sea—two blues, one full of sunlight and the other purple—set these fountains of perennial brightness like gems in lapis-lazuli. At a distance the same olives look hoary and soft—a veil of woven light or luminous haze. When the wind blows their branches all one way, they ripple like a sea of silver. But underneath their covert, in the shade, gray periwinkles wind among the snowy drift of allium. The narcissus sends its arrowy fragrance through the air, while, far and wide, red anemones burn like fire, with interchange of blue and lilac buds, white arums, orchises, and pink gladiolus. Wandering there, and seeing the pale flowers, stars white and pink and odorous, we dream of Olivet, or the grave Garden of the Agony, and the trees seem always whispering of sacred things. How people can blaspheme against the olives, and call them imitations of the willow, or complain that they are shabby shrubs, I do not know.*

This shore would stand for Shelley's Island of Epipsychidion, or the golden age which Empedocles describes, when the mild nations worshipped Aphrodite with incense and the images of beasts and yellow honey, and no blood was spilled upon her altars—when "the trees flourished with perennial leaves and fruit, and ample crops adorned their boughs through all the year." This even now is literally true of the lemon-groves, which do not cease to flower and ripen. Everything fits in to complete the reproduction of Greek pastoral life. The goats eat cytisus and myrtle on the shore; a whole flock gathered round me as I sat beneath a tuft of golden green euphorbia the other day, and nibbled bread from my hands. The frog still croaks by tank and fountain, "whom the Muses have ordained to sing for aye," in spite of

* Olive-trees must be studied at Mentone or San Remo, in Corfu, at Tivoli, on the coast between Syracuse and Catania, or on the lowlands of Apulia. The stunted but productive trees of the Rhone valley, for example, are no real measure of the beauty they can exhibit.

Bion's death. The narcissus, anemone, and hyacinth still tell their tales of love and death. Hesper still gazes on the shepherd from the mountain-head. The slender cypresses still vibrate, the pines murmur. Pan sleeps in noontide heat, and goatherds and wayfaring men lie down to slumber by the roadside, under olive-boughs in which cicadas sing. The little villages high up are just as white, the mountains just as gray and shadowy, when evening falls. Nothing is changed—except ourselves. I expect to find a statue of Priapus or pastoral Pan, hung with wreaths of flowers—the meal-cake, honey, and spilt wine upon his altar, and young boys and maidens dancing round. Surely, in some far-off glade, by the side of lemon-grove or garden, near the village, there must be still a pagan remnant of glad Nature-worship. Surely I shall chance upon some Thyrsis piping in the pine-tree shade, or Daphne flying from the arms of Phæbus. So I dream until I come upon the Calvary set on a solitary hillock, with its prayer-steps lending a wide prospect across the olives and the orange-trees, and the broad valleys, to immeasurable skies and purple seas. There is the iron cross, the wounded heart, the spear, the reed, the nails, the crown of thorns, the cup of sacrificial blood, the title, with its superscription royal and divine. The other day we crossed a brook and entered a lemon-field, rich with blossoms and carpeted with red anemones. Everything basked in sunlight and glittered with exceeding brilliancy of hue. A tiny white chapel stood in a corner of the enclosure. Two iron-grated windows let me see inside: it was a bare place, containing nothing but a wooden praying-desk, black and worm-eaten, an altar with its candles and no flowers, and above the altar a square picture brown with age. On the floor were scattered several pence, and in a vase above the holy-water vessel stood some withered hyacinths. As my sight became accustomed to the gloom, I could see from the darkness of the picture a pale Christ nailed to the cross with agonizing up-

ward eyes and ashy aureole above the bleeding thorns. Thus I stepped suddenly away from the outward pomp and bravery of nature to the inward aspirations, agonies, and martyrdoms of man—from Greek legends of the past to the real Christian present—and I remembered that an illimitable prospect has been opened to the world, that in spite of ourselves we must turn our eyes heavenward, inward, to the infinite unseen beyond us and within our souls. Nothing can take us back to Phæbus or to Pan. Nothing can again identify us with the simple, natural earth. "*Une immense espérance a traversé la terre,*" and these chapels, with their deep significances, lurk in the fair landscape like the cares of real life among our dreams of art, or like a fear of death and the hereafter in the midst of opera music. It is a strange contrast. The worship of men in those old times was symbolized by dances in the evening, banquets, libations, and mirth-making. "Euphrosyne" was alike the goddess of the righteous mind and of the merry heart. Old withered women telling their rosaries at dusk; belated shepherds crossing themselves beneath the stars when they pass the chapel; maidens weighed down with Margaret's anguish of unhappy love; youths vowing their life to contemplation in secluded cloisters—these are the human forms which gather round such chapels; and the motto of the worshippers consists in this, "Do often violence to thy desire." In the Tyrol we have seen whole villages praying together at daybreak before their day's work, singing their *Miserere* and their *Gloria* and their *Dies Iræ* to the sound of crashing organs and jangling bells; appealing in the midst of Nature's splendor to the Spirit which is above Nature, which dwells in darkness rather than light, and loves the yearnings and contentions of our soul more than its summer gladness and peace. Even the olives here tell more to us of Olivet and the Garden than of the oil-press and the wrestling-ground. The lilies carry us to the Sermon on the Mount, and

teach humility, instead of summoning up some legend of a god's love for a mortal. The hillside tanks and running streams, and water-brooks swollen by sudden rain, speak of Palestine. We call the white flowers stars of Bethlehem. The large sceptre-reed; the fig-tree, lingering in barrenness when other trees are full of fruit; the locust-beans of the Caruba:—for one suggestion of Greek idyls there is yet another, of far deeper, dearer power.

But who can resist the influence of Greek ideas at the Cape St. Martin? Down to the verge of the sea stretch the tall, twisted stems of Levant pines, and on the caverned limestone breaks the deep blue water. Dazzling as marble are these rocks, pointed and honeycombed with constant dashing of the restless sea, tufted with corallines and gray and purple sea-weeds in the little pools, but hard and dry and rough above tide level. Nor does the sea always lap them quietly; for the last few days it has come tumbling in, roaring and raging on the beach with huge waves crystalline in their transparency, and maned with fleecy spray. Such were the rocks and such the swell of breakers when Ulysses grasped the shore after his long swim. Samphire, very salt and fragrant, grows in the rocky honeycomb; then lentisk and beach-loving myrtle, both exceeding green and bushy; then rosemary and euphorbia above the reach of spray. Fishermen, with their long reeds, sit lazily perched upon black rocks above blue waves, sunning themselves as much as seeking sport. One distant tip of snow, seen far away behind the hills, reminds us of an alien, unremembered winter. While dreaming there this fancy came into my head: Polyphemus was born yonder in the Gorbio Valley. There he fed his sheep and goats, and on the hills found scanty pasture for his kine. He and his mother lived in the white house by the cypress near the stream where tulips grow. Young Galatea, nursed in the caverns of these rocks, white as the foam, and shy as the sea fishes, came one morning up the valley to pick

mountain hyacinths, and little Polyphemus led the way. He knew where violets and sweet narcissus grew, as well as Galatea where pink coralline and spreading sea-flowers with their waving arms. But Galatea, having filled her lap with bluebells, quite forgot the leaping kids, and piping Cyclops, and cool summer caves, and yellow honey, and black ivy, and sweet vine, and water cold as Alpine snow. Down the swift streamlet she danced laughingly, and made herself once more bitter with the sea. But Polyphemus remained—hungry, sad, gazing on the barren sea, and piping to the mockery of its waves.

Filled with these Greek fancies, it is strange to come upon a little sandstone dell furrowed by trickling streams and overgrown with English primroses; or to enter the village of Roccabruna, with its mediæval castle and the motto on its walls, *Tempora labuntur tacitisque senescimus annis*. A true motto for the town, where the butcher comes but once a week, and where men and boys, and dogs and palms and lemon-trees, grow up and flourish and decay in the same hollow of the sunny mountain-side. Into the hard conglomerate of the hill the town is built; house walls and precipices mortised into one another, dovetailed by the art of years gone by, and riveted by age. The same plants grow from both alike—spurge, cistus, rue, and henbane, constant to the desolation of abandoned dwellings. From the castle you look down on roofs, brown tiles and chimney-pots, set one above the other like a big card-castle. Each house has its foot on a neighbor's neck, and its shoulder set against the native stone. The streets meander in and out, and up and down, overarched and balconied, but very clean. They swarm with children, healthy, happy little monkeys, who grow fat on salt fish and yellow polenta, with oil and sun *ad libitum*.

At night from Roccabruna you may see the flaring gas-lamps of the gaming-house at Monaco, that Armida's garden of the nine-

teenth century. It is the sunniest and most sheltered spot of all the coast. Long ago Lucan said of Monaco, "*Non Corus in illum jus habet aut Zephyrus*;" winter never comes to nip its tangled cactuses and aloes and geraniums. The air swoons with the scent of lemon-groves; tall palm-trees wave their graceful branches by the shore; music of the softest and the loudest swells from the palace; cool corridors and sunny seats stand ready for the noontide heat or evening calm; without, are olive-gardens, green and fresh and full of flowers. But the witch herself holds her high court and never-ending festival of sin in the painted banquet-halls and among the green tables.

Let us leave this scene and turn with the country-folk of Roccabruna to St. Michael's Church at Mentone. High above the sea it stands, and from its open doors you look across the mountains with their olive-trees. Inside the church is a seething mass of country-folk and towns-people, mostly women, and these almost all old, but picturesque beyond description; kerchiefs of every color, wrinkles of every shape and depth, skins of every tone of brown and yellow, voices of every gruffness, shrillness, strength, and weakness. Wherever an empty corner can be found, it is soon filled by tottering babies and mischievous children. The country-women come with their large dangling earrings of thin gold, wearing pink tulips or lemon-buds in their black hair. A low buzz of gossiping and mutual recognition keeps the air alive. The whole service seems a holiday—a general enjoyment of gala dresses and friendly greetings, very different from the silence, immobility, and *noli me tangere* aspect of an English congregation. Over all drones, rattles, snores, and shrieks the organ; wailing, querulous, asthmatic, incomplete, its everlasting nasal chant—always beginning, never ending, through a range of two or three notes ground into one monotony. The voices of the congregation rise and sink above it. These Southern people, like the Arabs, the Apulians,

and the Spaniards, seem to find their music in a burdy-gurdy swell of sound. The other day we met a little girl, walking and spinning, and singing all the while, whose song was just another version of this chant. It has a discontented plaintive wail, as if it came from some vast age, and were a cousin of primeval winds.

At first sight, by the side of Mentone, San Remo is sadly prosaic. The valleys seem to sprawl, and the universal olives are monotonously gray upon their thick clay soil. Yet the wealth of flowers in the fat earth is wonderful. One might fancy one's self in a weedy farm flower-bed invaded by stray oats and beans and cabbages and garlic from the kitchen-garden. The country does not suggest a single Greek idea. It has no form or outline—no barren peaks, no spare and difficult vegetation. The beauty is rich but tame—valleys green with oats and corn, blossoming cherry-trees and sweet bean-fields, figs coming into leaf, and arrowy bay-trees by the side of sparkling streams: here and there a broken aqueduct or rainbow bridge hung with maidenhair and brier and clematis and sarsaparilla.

In the cathedral church of San Siro on Good-Friday they hang the columns and the windows with black; they cover the pictures and deface the altar; above the high-altar they raise a crucifix, and below they place a catafalque with the effigy of the dead Christ. To this sad symbol they address their prayers and incense, chant their "litanies and luries," and clash the rattles which commemorate their rage against the traitor Judas. So far have we already passed away from the Greek feeling of Mentone. As I listened to the hideous din, I could not but remember the Theocritean burial of Adonis. Two funeral beds prepared: two feasts recurring in the spring-time of the year. What a difference beneath this superficial similarity—*καλὸς νέκυσ ὅα καθεύδων*—*atritus agra macie*. But the fast of Good-Friday is followed by the festival of Easter. That, after all, is the chief difference.

After leaving the cathedral we saw a pretty picture in a dull old street of San Remo—three children leaning from a window, blowing bubbles. The bubbles floated down the street, of every color, round and trembling, like the dreams of life which children dream. The town is certainly most picturesque. It resembles a huge glacier of houses poured over a wedge of rock, running down the sides and along the ridge, and spreading itself into a fan between two torrents on the shore below. House over house, with balcony and staircase, convent turret and church tower, palm-trees and olives, roof gardens and clinging creepers—this white cataract of buildings streams downward from the lazaret and sanctuary and sandstone quarries on the hill. It is a mass of streets placed close above each other, and linked together with arms and arches of solid masonry, as a protection from the earthquakes which are frequent at San Remo. The walls are tall, and form a labyrinth of gloomy passages and treacherous blind alleys, where the Moors of old might meet with a ferocious welcome. Indeed, San Remo is a fortress as well as a dwelling-place. Over its gateways may still be traced the pipes for molten lead, and on its walls the eyeloops for arrows, with brackets for the feet of archers. Masses of building have been shaken down by earthquakes. The ruins of what once were houses gape with blackened chimneys and dark forlorn cellars; mazes of fungus and unhealthy weeds among the still secure habitations. Hardly a ray of light penetrates the streets; one learns the meaning of the Italian word *uggia* from their cold and gloom. During the day they are deserted by every one but babies and witchlike old women—some gossiping, some sitting vacant at the house-door, some spinning or weaving, or minding little children—ugly and ancient as are their own homes, yet clean as are the streets. The younger population goes afield; the men on mules laden for the hills, the women burdened like mules with heavy and disgusting loads. It

is an exceptionally good-looking race: tall, well-grown, and strong. But to the streets again. The shops in the upper town are few, chiefly wine-booths and stalls for the sale of salt fish, eggs, and bread, or cobblers' and tinkers' ware. Notwithstanding the darkness of their dwellings, the people have a love of flowers; azaleas lean from their windows, and vines, carefully protected by a sheath of brickwork, climb the six stories, to blossom out into a pergola upon the roof. Look at that mass of greenery and colors, dimly seen from beneath, with a yellow cat sunning herself upon the parapet! To reach such a garden and such sunlight who would not mount six stories and thread a labyrinth of passages? I should prefer a room upon the east side of the town, looking southward to the Molo and the sea, with a sound of water beneath, and a palm soaring up to fan my window with his feathery leaves.

The shrines are little spots of brightness in the gloomy streets. Madonna with a sword; Christ holding his pierced and bleeding heart; l'Eterno Padre pointing to the dead Son stretched upon his knee; some souls in torment; St. Roch reminding us of old plagues by the spot upon his thigh—these are the symbols of the shrines. Before them stand rows of pots filled with gilly-flowers, placed there by pious, simple, praying hands—by maidens come to tell their sorrows to our Lady rich in sorrow, by old women bent and shrivelled, in hopes of paradise or gratitude for happy days, when Madonna kept Cecchino faithful to his home, or saved the baby from the fever.

Lower down, between the sea and the hill, is the municipal, aristocratic, ecclesiastical quarter of San Remo. There stands the Palace Borea—a truly princely pile, built in the last Renaissance style of splendor, with sea-nymphs and dolphins, and satyric heads, half lips, half leafage, round about its doors and windows. Once it formed the dwelling of a feudal family, but now it is

a roomy ant-hill of a hundred houses, shops, and offices, the Boreas of to-day retaining but a portion of one flat, and making profit of the rest. There, too, are the barracks and the syndic's hall; the Jesuits' school, crowded with boys and girls; the shops for clothes, confectionery, and trinkets; the piazza, with its fountain and tasselled planes, and flowery chestnut-trees, a mass of greenery. Under these trees the idlers lounge, boys play at leap-frog, men at bowls. Women in San Remo work all day, but men and boys play for the most part at bowls or toss-penny or leap-frog or morra. San Siro, the cathedral, stands at one end of the square. Do not go inside; it has a sickly smell of immemorial incense and garlic, undefinable and horrible. Far better looks San Siro from the parapet above the torrent. There you see its irregular half-Gothic outline across a tangle of lemon-trees and olives. The stream rushes by through high walls covered with creepers, spanned by ferny bridges, feathered by one or two old tufty palms. And over all rises the ancient turret of San Siro, like a Spanish giralda, a minaret of pinnacles and pyramids and dome bubbles, with windows showing heavy bells, old clocks, and sundials painted on the walls, and a cupola of green and yellow tiles like serpent-scales, to crown the whole. The sea lies beyond, and the house-roofs break it with gray horizontal lines. Then there are convents, legions of them, large white edifices, Jesuitical apparently for the most part, clanging importunate bells, leaning rose-blossoms and cypress-boughs over their jealous walls.

Lastly, there is the port—the mole running out into the sea, the quay planted with plane-trees, and the fishing-boats—by which San Remo is connected with the naval glory of the past—with the Riviera that gave birth to Columbus—with the Liguria that the Dorias ruled—with the great name of Genoa. The port is empty enough now; but from the pier you look back on San Remo and its circling hills, a jewelled town set in illimitable olive

grayness. The quay seems also to be the cattle-market. There the small buff cows of North Italy repose after their long voyage or march, kneeling on the sandy ground or rubbing their sides against the wooden cross awry with age and shorn of all its symbols. Lambs frisk among the boats; impudent kids nibble the drooping ears of patient mules. Hinds in white jackets and knee-breeches made of skin lead shaggy rams and fiercely bearded goats, ready to butt at every barking dog, and always seeking opportunities of flight. Farmers and parish priests in black petticoats feel the cattle and dispute about the price, or whet their bargains with a draught of wine. Meanwhile the nets are brought on shore glittering with the fry of sardines, which are cooked like white-bait, with cuttlefish—amorphous objects stretching shiny feelers on the hot, dry sand—and prickly purple eggs of the sea-urchin. Women go about their labor through the throng, some carrying stones upon their heads, or unloading boats and bearing planks of wood in single file, two marching side by side beneath one load of lime, others scarcely visible under a stack of oats, another with her baby in its cradle fast asleep.

San Remo has an elder brother among the hills, which is called San Romolo, after one of the old bishops of Genoa. Who San Remo was is buried in remote antiquity; but his town has prospered, while of San Romolo nothing remains but a ruined hill-convent among pine-trees. The old convent is worth visiting. Its road carries you into the heart of the sierra which surrounds San Remo, a hill-country something like the Jura, undulating and green to the very top with maritime pines and pinasters. Riding up, you hear all manner of Alpine sounds; brawling streams, tinkling cow-bells, and herdsmen calling to each other on the slopes. Beneath you lies San Remo, scarcely visible; and over it the great sea rises ever so far into the sky, until the white sails hang in air, and cloud and sea-line melt into each other indistinguishably.

Spanish chestnuts surround the monastery, with bright blue gentians, hepaticas, forget-me-nots, and primroses about their roots. The house itself is perched on a knoll with ample prospect to the sea and to the mountains, very near to heaven, within a theatre of noble contemplations and soul-stirring thoughts. If Mentone spoke to me of the poetry of Greek pastoral life, this convent speaks of mediæval monasticism—of solitude with God, above, beneath, and all around, of silence and repose from agitating cares, of continuity in prayer, and changelessness of daily life. Some precepts of the *Imitatio* came into my mind: "Be never wholly idle; read or write, pray or meditate, or work with diligence for the common needs." "Praiseworthy is it for the religious man to go abroad but seldom, and to seem to shun, and keep his eyes from men." "Sweet is the cell when it is often sought, but if we gad about, it wearies us by its seclusion." Then I thought of the monks so living in this solitude; their cell windows looking across the valley to the sea, through summer and winter, under sun and stars. Then would they read or write, what long melodious hours! or would they pray, what stations on the pine-clad hills! or would they toil, what terraces to build and plant with corn, what flowers to tend, what cows to milk and pasture, what wood to cut, what fir-cones to gather for the winter fire! or should they yearn for silence, silence from their comrades of the solitude, what whispering-galleries of God, where never human voice breaks loudly, but winds and streams and lonely birds disturb the awful stillness! In such a hermitage as this, only more wild, lived St. Francis of Assisi, among the Apennines.* It was there that he learned the tongues of beasts and birds, and preached them sermons. Stretched for hours motionless on the bare rocks, colored like them and rough like them in his brown peasant's serge, he prayed and meditated, saw the vision of Christ crucified, and planned his order to

* Dante, *Par.* xi. 106.

regenerate a vicious age. So still he lay, so long, so like a stone, so gentle were his eyes, so kind and low his voice, that the mice nibbled bread-crumbs from his wallet, lizards ran over him, and larks sang to him in the air. There, too, in those long, solitary vigils, the Spirit of God came upon him, and the spirit of Nature was even as God's Spirit, and he sang: "*Laudato sia Dio mio Signore, con tutte le creature, specialmente messer lo frate sole; per suor luna, e per le stelle; per frate vento e per l'aire, e nuvolo, e sereno e ogni tempo.*" Half the value of this hymn would be lost were we to forget how it was written, in what solitudes and mountains far from men, or to ticket it with some abstract word like Pantheism. Pantheism it is not; but an acknowledgment of that brotherhood, beneath the love of God, by which the sun and moon and stars, and wind and air and cloud, and clearness and all weather, and all creatures, are bound together with the soul of man.

Few, of course, were like St. Francis. Probably no monk of San Romolo was inspired with his enthusiasm for humanity, or had his revelation of the Divine Spirit inherent in the world. Still fewer can have felt the æsthetic charm of nature but most vaguely. It was as much as they could boast, if they kept steadily to the rule of their order, and attended to the concerns each of his own soul. A terrible selfishness, if rightly considered; but one which accorded with the delusion that this world is a cave of care, the other world a place of torture or undying bliss, death the prime object of our meditation, and life-long abandonment of our fellow-men the highest mode of existence. Why, then, should monks, so persuaded of the riddle of the earth, have placed themselves in scenes so beautiful? Why rose the Camaldolis and Chartreuses over Europe? white convents on the brows of lofty hills, among the rustling boughs of Vallombrosas, in the grassy meadows of Engelbergs—always the eyries of Nature's lovers, men

smitten with the loveliness of earth? There is surely some meaning in these poetic stations.

Here is a sentence of the *Imitatio* which throws some light upon the hymn of St. Francis and the sites of Benedictine monasteries, by explaining the value of natural beauty for monks who spent their life in studying death: "If thy heart were right, then would every creature be to thee a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so small and vile that does not show forth the goodness of God." With this sentence bound about their foreheads walked Fra Angelico and St. Francis. To men like them the mountain valleys and the skies, and all that they contained, were full of deep significance. Though they reasoned "*de conditione humanæ miseriæ*," and "*de contemptu mundi*," yet the whole world was a pageant of God's glory, a testimony to his goodness. Their chastened senses, pure hearts, and simple wills were as wings by which they soared above the things of earth and sent the music of their souls aloft with every other creature in the symphony of praise. To them, as to Blake, the sun was no mere blazing disk or ball, but "an innumerable company of the heavenly host singing, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.'" To them the winds were brothers, and the streams were sisters—brethren in common dependence upon God their Father, brethren in common consecration to his service, brethren by blood, brethren by vows of holiness. Unquestioning faith rendered this world no puzzle; they overlooked the things of sense because the spiritual things were ever present and as clear as day. Yet did they not forget that spiritual things are symbolized by things of sense; and so the smallest herb of grass was vital to their tranquil contemplations. We, who have lost sight of the invisible world, who set our affections more on things of earth, fancy that because these monks despised the world, and did not write about its landscapes, therefore they were dead to its

beauty. This is mere vanity: the mountains, stars, seas, fields, and living things were only swallowed up in the one thought of God, and made subordinate to the awfulness of human destinies. We, to whom hills are hills, and seas are seas, and stars are ponderable quantities, speak, write, and reason of them as of objects interesting in themselves. The monks were less ostensibly concerned about such things, because they only found in them the vestibules and symbols of a hidden mystery.

The contrast between the Greek and mediæval modes of regarding Nature is not a little remarkable. Both Greeks and monks, judged by nineteenth-century standards, were unobservant of natural beauties. They make but brief and general remarks upon landscapes and the like. The *ποντίων τε κυμάτων ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα* is very rare. But the Greeks stopped at the threshold of Nature; the forces they found there, the gods, were inherent in Nature and distinct. They did not, like the monks, place one spiritual power, omnipotent and omnipresent, above all, and see in Nature lessons of divine government. We ourselves, having somewhat overstrained the latter point of view, are now apt to return vaguely to Greek fancies. Perhaps, too, we talk so much about scenery because it is *scenery* to us, and the life has gone out of it.

I cannot leave the Cornice without one word about a place which lies between Mentone and San Remo. Bordighera has a beauty which is quite distinct from both. Palms are its chief characteristic. They lean against the garden walls, and feather the wells outside the town, where women come with brazen pitchers to draw water. In some of the marshy tangles of the plain they spring from a thick undergrowth of spiky leaves, and rear their tall aerial arms against the deep blue background of the sea or darker purple of the distant hills. White pigeons fly about among their branches, and the air is loud with cooings and with rustlings, and the hoarser croaking of innumerable frogs. Then,

in the olive-groves that stretch along the level shore, are labyrinths of rare and curious plants, painted tulips and white periwinkles, flinging their light of blossoms and dark, glossy leaves down the swift channels of the brawling streams. On each side of the rivulets they grow, like sister cataracts of flowers instead of spray. At night fresh stars come out along the coast, beneath the stars of heaven; for you can see the lamps of Ventimiglia and Mentone and Monaco, and, far away, the light-houses upon the promontories of Antibes and the Estrelles. At dawn, a vision of Corsica grows from the sea. The island lies eighty miles away, but one can trace the dark strip of irregular peaks glowing amid the gold and purple of the rising sun. If the air is clear and bright, the snows and overvaulting clouds which crown its mountains shine all day, and glitter like an apparition in the bright blue sky. "Phantom fair," half raised above the sea, it stands, as unreal and transparent as the moon when seen in April sunlight, yet not to be confounded with the shape of any cloud. If Mentone speaks of Greek legends, and San Romolo restores the monastic past, we feel ourselves at Bordighera transported to the East; and lying under its tall palms can fancy ourselves at Tyre or Daphne, or in the gardens of a Moslem prince.

NOTE.—Dec., 1873. My old impressions are renewed and confirmed by a third visit, after seven years, to this coast. For purely idyllic loveliness the Cornice is surpassed by nothing in the South. A very few spots in Sicily, the road between Castellamare and Amalfi, and the island of Corfu, are its only rivals in this style of scenery. From Cannes to Sestri is one continuous line of exquisitely modulated landscape beauty, which can only be fully appreciated by travellers in carriage or on foot.

AJACCIO.

It generally happens that visitors to Ajaccio pass over from the Cornice coast, leaving Nice at night, and waking about sunrise to find themselves beneath the frowning mountains of Corsica. The difference between the scenery of the island and the shores which they have left is very striking. Instead of the rocky mountains of the Cornice, intolerably dry and barren at their summits, but covered at their base with villages and ancient towns and olive-fields, Corsica presents a scene of solitary and peculiar grandeur. The highest mountain-tops are covered with snow, and beneath the snow-level to the sea they are as green as Irish or as English hills, but nearly uninhabited and uncultivated. Valleys of almost Alpine verdure are succeeded by tracts of chestnut wood and scattered pines, or deep and flowery brushwood—the “maquis” of Corsica, which yields shelter to its traditional outlaws and bandits. Yet upon these hill-sides there are hardly any signs of life; the whole country seems abandoned to primeval wildness and the majesty of desolation. Nothing can possibly be more unlike the smiling Riviera, every square mile of which is cultivated like a garden, and every valley and bay dotted over with white villages. After steaming for a few hours along this savage coast, the rocks which guard the entrance to the bay of Ajaccio, murderous-looking teeth and needles, ominously christened Sanguinari, are passed, and we enter the splendid land-locked harbor, on the northern shore of which Ajaccio is built. About three centuries ago the town, which used to occupy the extreme or eastern end of the bay, was removed to a more healthy point upon the northern coast, so

that Ajaccio is quite a modern city. Visitors who expect to find in it the picturesqueness of Genoa or San Remo, or even of Mentone, will be sadly disappointed. It is simply a healthy, well-appointed town of recent date, the chief merits of which are that it has wide streets, and is free, externally at least, from the filth and rubbish of most southern seaports.

But if Ajaccio itself is not picturesque, the scenery which it commands, and in the heart of which it lies, is of the most magnificent. The bay of Ajaccio resembles a vast Italian lake—a Lago Maggiore, with greater space between the mountains and the shore. From the snow-peaks of the interior, huge granite crystals clothed in white, to the southern extremity of the bay, peak succeeds peak and ridge rises behind ridge in a line of wonderful variety and beauty. The atmospheric changes of light and shadow, cloud and color, on this upland country are as subtle and as various as those which lend their beauty to the scenery of the lakes, while the sea below is blue and rarely troubled. One could never get tired with looking at this view. Morning and evening add new charms to its sublimity and beauty. In the early morning Monte d'Oro sparkles like a Monte Rosa with its fresh snow, and the whole inferior range puts on the crystal blueness of dawn among the Alps. In the evening violet and purple tints and the golden glow of Italian sunset lend a different lustre to the fairyland. In fact the beauties of Switzerland and Italy are curiously blended in this landscape.

In soil and vegetation the country round Ajaccio differs much from the Cornice. There are very few olive-trees, nor is the cultivated ground backed up so immediately by stony mountains; but between the sea-shore and the hills there is plenty of space for pasture-land and orchards of apricot and peach trees and orange-gardens. This undulating champaign, green with meadows and watered with clear streams, is very refreshing to the eyes of North-

ern people, who may have wearied of the bareness and grayness of Nice or Mentone. It is traversed by excellent roads, recently constructed on a plan of the French government, which intersect the country in all directions, and offer an infinite variety of rides or drives to visitors. The broken granite of which these roads are made is very pleasant for riding over. Most of the hills through which they strike after starting from Ajaccio are clothed with a thick brushwood of box, ilex, lentish, arbutus, and laurustinus, which stretches down irregularly into vineyards, olive-gardens, and meadows. It is, indeed, the native growth of the island; for wherever a piece of ground is left untilled, the *macchi* grow up, and the scent of their multitudinous aromatic blossoms is so strong that it may be smelt miles out at sea. Napoleon, at St. Helena, referred to this fragrance when he said that he should know Corsica blindfold by the smell of its soil. Occasional woods of holm oak make darker patches on the landscape, and a few pines fringe the side of enclosure walls or towers. The prickly pear runs riot in and out among the hedges and upon the walls, diversifying the colors of the landscape with its strange gray-green masses and unwieldy fans. In spring, when peach and almond trees are in blossom, and when the roadside is starred with asphodels, this country is most beautiful in its gladness. The *macchi* blaze with *cistus*-flowers of red and silver. Golden broom mixes with the dark purple of the great French lavender, and over the whole mass of blossom wave plumes of Mediterranean heath and sweet-scented yellow *coronilla*. Under the stems of the ilex peep cyclamens, pink and sweet; the hedgerows are a tangle of vetches, convolvuluses, lupines, orchises, and alliums, with here and there a purple iris. It would be difficult to describe all the rare and lovely plants which are found here in a profusion that surpasses even the flower-gardens of the Cornice, and reminds one of the most favored Alpine valleys in their early spring.

Since the French occupied Corsica they have done much for the island by improving its harbors and making good roads and endeavoring to mitigate the ferocity of the people. But they have many things to contend against, and Corsica is still behind the other provinces of France. The people are idle, haughty, umbrageous, fiery, quarrelsome, fond of gypsy life, and retentive through generations of old feuds and prejudices to an almost inconceivable extent. Then the nature of the country itself offers serious obstacles to its proper colonization and cultivation. The savage state of the island and its internal feuds have disposed the Corsicans to quit the seaboard for their mountain villages and fortresses, so that the great plains at the foot of the hills are unwholesome for want of tillage and drainage. Again, the mountains themselves have in many parts been stripped of their forests and converted into mere wildernesses of macchi stretching up and down their slopes for miles and miles of useless desolation. Another impediment to proper cultivation is found in the old habit of what is called free pasturage. The highland shepherds are allowed by the national custom to drive down their flocks and herds to the lowlands during the winter, so that fences are broken, young crops are browsed over and trampled down, and agriculture becomes a mere impossibility. The last and chief difficulty against which the French have had to contend, and up to this time with apparent success, is brigandage. The Corsican system of brigandage is so very different from that of the Italians, Sicilians, and Greeks that a word may be said about its peculiar character. In the first place, it has nothing at all to do with robbery and thieving. The Corsican bandit took to a free life among the macchi, not for the sake of supporting himself by lawless depredation, but because he had put himself under a legal and social ban by murdering some one in obedience to the strict code of honor of his country. His victim may have been the

hereditary foe of his house for generations, or else the newly-made enemy of yesterday. But in either case, if he had killed him fairly, after a due notification of his intention to do so, he was held to have fulfilled a duty rather than to have committed a crime. He then betook himself to the dense tangles of evergreens which I have described, where he lived upon the charity of country folk and shepherds. In the eyes of those simple people it was a sacred duty to relieve the necessities of outlaws and to guard them from the bloodhounds of justice. There was scarcely a respectable family in Corsica who had not one or more of its members thus *alla campagna*, as it was euphemistically styled. The Corsicans themselves have attributed this miserable state of things to two principal causes. The first of these was the ancient bad government of the island. Under its Genoese rulers no justice was administered, and private vengeance for homicide or insult became a necessary consequence among the haughty and warlike families of the mountain villages. Secondly, the Corsicans have been from time immemorial accustomed to wear arms in every-day life. They used to sit at their house doors and pace the streets with musket, pistol, dagger, and cartridge-box on their persons; and on the most trivial occasion of merriment or enthusiasm they would discharge their fire-arms. This habit gave a bloody termination to many quarrels which might have ended more peaceably had the parties been unarmed; and so the seeds of *vendetta* were constantly being sown. Statistics published by the French government present a hideous picture of the state of bloodshed in Corsica even during this century. In one period of thirty years (between 1821 and 1850) there were 4319 murders in the island. Almost every man was watching for his neighbor's life or seeking how to save his own, and agriculture and commerce were neglected for this grisly game of hide-and-seek. In 1853 the French began to take strong measures,

and, under the Prefect Thuillier, they hunted the bandits from the macchi, killing between two and three hundred of them. At the same time an edict was promulgated against bearing arms. It is forbidden to sell the old Corsican stiletto in the shops; and no one may carry a gun, even for sporting purposes, unless he obtains a special license. These licenses, moreover, are only granted for short and precisely measured periods.

In order to appreciate the stern and gloomy character of the Corsicans, it is necessary to leave the smiling gardens of Ajaccio and to visit some of the more distant mountain villages—Vico, Cavro, Bastelica, or Bocognano—any of which may easily be reached from the capital. Immediately after quitting the sea-board we enter a country austere in its simplicity, solemn without relief, yet dignified by its majesty and by the sense of freedom it inspires. As we approach the mountains the macchi become taller, feathering man-high above the road and stretching far away upon the hills. Gigantic masses of granite shaped like buttresses and bastions seem to guard the approaches to these hills, while, looking backward over the green plain, the sea lies smiling in a haze of blue among the rocky horns and misty headlands of the coast. There is a stateliness about the abrupt inclination of these granite slopes, rising from their frowning portals by sharp *arêtes* to the snows piled on their summits, which contrasts in a strange way with the softness and beauty of the mingling sea and plain beneath. In no landscape are more various qualities combined; in none are they so harmonized as to produce so strong a sense of majestic freedom and severe power. Suppose that we are on the road to Corte, and have now reached Bocognano, the first considerable village since we left Ajaccio. Bocognano might be chosen as typical of Corsican hill-villages, with its narrow street and tall tower-like houses of five or six stories high, faced with rough granite, and pierced with the smallest

windows and very narrow doorways. These buildings have a mournful and desolate appearance. There is none of the grandeur of antiquity about them, no sculptured arms or castellated turrets or balconies or spacious staircases such as are common in the poorest towns of Italy. The signs of warlike occupation which they offer, and their sinister aspect of vigilance, are thoroughly prosaic. They seem to suggest a state of society in which feud and violence were systematized into routine. There is no relief to the savage austerity of their forbidding aspect, no signs of wealth or household comfort, no trace of art, no liveliness and gracefulness of architecture. Perched upon their coigns of vantage, these villages seem always menacing, as if Saracen pirates or Genoese marauders or bandits bent on vengeance were still forever on the watch. Forests of immensely old chestnut-trees surround Bocognano on every side, so that you step from the village streets into the shade of woods that seem to have remained untouched for centuries. The country people support themselves almost entirely upon the fruit of these chestnuts; and there is a large department of Corsica called Castagniccia from the prevalence of these trees and the sustenance which the inhabitants derive from them. Close by the village brawls a torrent such as one may see in the Monte Rosa valleys or the Apennines, but very rarely in Switzerland. It is of a pure green color, absolutely like Indian jade, foaming round the granite boulders and gliding over smooth slabs of polished stone and eddying into still, deep pools fringed with fern. Monte d'Oro, one of the largest mountains of Corsica, soars above; and from his snows the purest water, undefiled by glacier mud or the *débria* of avalanches, melts away. Following the stream, we rise through the *macchi* and the chestnut woods, which grow more sparsely by degrees until we reach the zone of beeches. Here the scene seems suddenly transferred to the Pyrenees; for the road

is carried along abrupt slopes thickly set with gigantic beech-trees overgrown with pink and silver lichens. In the early spring their last year's leaves are still crisp with hoarfrost. One morning's journey has brought us from the summer of Ajaccio to winter on these heights, where no flowers are visible but the pale hellebore and tiny lilac crocuses. Snow-drifts stretch by the roadside, and one by one the pioneers of the vast pine woods of the interior appear. A great portion of the pine forest (*Pinus larix*, or Corsican pine, not larch) between Bocognano and Corte had recently been burned by accident when we passed by. Nothing could be more forlorn than the black leafless stems and branches emerging from the snow. Some of these trees were mast-high and some mere saplings. Corte itself is built among the mountain fastnesses of the interior. The snows and granite cliffs of Monte Rotondo overhang it to the northwest, while two fair valleys lead downward from its eyrie to the eastern coast. The rock on which it stands rises to a sharp point, sloping southward, and commanding the valleys of the Golo and the Tavignano. Remembering that Corte was the old capital of Corsica and the centre of General Paoli's government, we are led to compare the town with Innsprück, Meran, or Grenoble. In point of scenery and situation it is hardly second to any of these mountain-girdled cities, but its poverty and bareness are scarcely less striking than those of Bocognano.

The whole Corsican character, with its stern love of justice, its furious revengefulness and wild passion for freedom, seems to be illustrated by the peculiar elements of grandeur and desolation in this landscape. When we traverse the forest of Vico or the rocky pasture-lands of Niolo, the history of the Corsican national heroes, Giudice della Rocca and Sampiero, becomes intelligible; nor do we fail to understand some of the mysterious attraction which led the more daring spirits of the island to prefer a free

life among the *macchi* and pine woods to placid lawful occupations in farms and villages. The lives of the two men whom I have mentioned are so prominent in Corsican history, and are so often still upon the lips of the common people, that it may be well to sketch their outlines in the foreground of the *Salvator Rosa* landscape just described. Giudice was the governor of Corsica, as lieutenant for the Pisans, at the end of the thirteenth century. At that time the island belonged to the Republic of Pisa, but the Genoese were encroaching on them by land and sea, and the whole life of their brave champion was spent in a desperate struggle with the invaders, until at last he died, old, blind, and in prison at the command of his savage foes. Giudice was the title which the Pisans usually conferred upon their governor, and Della Rocca deserved it by right of his own inexorable love of justice. Indeed, justice seems to have been with him a passion, swallowing up all other feelings of his nature. All the stories which are told of him turn upon this point in his character; and though they may not be strictly true, they illustrate the stern virtues for which he was celebrated among the Corsicans, and show what kind of men this harsh and gloomy nation loved to celebrate as heroes. This is not the place either to criticise these legends or to recount them at full length. The most famous and the most characteristic may, however, be briefly told. On one occasion, after a victory over the Genoese, he sent a message that the captives in his hands should be released if their wives and sisters came to sue for them. The Genoese ladies embarked and arrived in Corsica, and to Giudice's nephew was intrusted the duty of fulfilling his uncle's promise. In the course of executing his commission, the youth was so smitten with the beauty of one of the women that he dishonored her. Thereupon Giudice had him at once put to death. Another story shows the Spartan justice of this hero in a less savage light. He was passing

by a cowherd's cottage, when he heard some young calves bleating. On inquiring what distressed them, he was told that the calves had not enough milk to drink after the farm people had been served. Then Giudice made it a law that the calves throughout the land should take their fill before the cows were milked.

Sampiero belongs to a later period of Corsican history. After a long course of misgovernment, the Genoese rule had become unbearable. There was no pretence of administering justice, and private vengeance had full sway in the island. The sufferings of the nation were so great that the time had come for a new judge or savior to rise among them. Sampiero was the son of obscure parents who lived at Bastelica. But his abilities very soon declared themselves and made a way for him in the world. He spent his youth in the armies of the Medici and of the French Francis, gaining great renown as a brave soldier. Bayard became his friend, and Francis made him captain of his Corsican bands. But Sampiero did not forget the wrongs of his native land while thus on foreign service. He resolved, if possible, to undermine the power of Genoa, and spent the whole of his manhood and old age in one long struggle with their great captain, Stephen Doria. Of his stern patriotism and Roman severity of virtue, the following story is a terrible illustration. Sampiero, though a man of mean birth, had married an heiress of the noble Corsican house of the Ornani. His wife, Vannina, was a woman of timid and flexible nature, who, though devoted to her husband, fell into the snares of his enemies. During his absence on an embassy to Algiers the Genoese induced her to leave her home at Marseilles and to seek refuge in their city, persuading her that this step would secure the safety of her child. She was starting on her journey, when a friend of Sampiero arrested her and brought her back to Aix, in Provence. Sampiero, when he heard of these events, hurried to France, and was received by a relative of his,

who hinted that he had known of Vannina's projected flight. "E tu hai taciuto?" was Sampiero's only answer, accompanied by a stroke of his poniard that killed the lukewarm cousin. Sampiero now brought his wife from Aix to Marseilles, preserving the most absolute silence on the way, and there, on entering his house, he killed her with his own hand. It is said that he loved Vannina passionately, and when she was dead he caused her to be buried with magnificence in the Church of St. Francis. Like Giudice, Sampiero fell at last a prey to treachery. The murder of Vannina had made the Ornani his deadly foes. In order to avenge her blood, they played into the hands of the Genoese and laid a plot by which the noblest of the Corsicans was brought to death. First they gained over to their scheme a monk of Bastelica called Ambrogio and Sampiero's own squire and shield-bearer, Vittolo. By means of these men, in whom he trusted, he was drawn, defenceless and unattended, into a deeply wooded ravine near Cavo, not very far from his birthplace, where the Ornani and their Genoese troops surrounded him. Sampiero fired his pistols in vain, for Vittolo had loaded them with the shot downwards. Then he drew his sword and began to lay about him, when the same Vittolo, the Judas, stabbed him from behind, and the old lion fell dead by his friend's hand. Sampiero was sixty-nine when he died, in the year 1567. It is satisfactory to know that the Corsicans have called traitors and foes to their country Vittoli forever. These two examples of Corsican patriots are enough; we need not add to theirs the history of Paoli, a milder and more humane, but scarcely less heroic leader. Paoli, however, in the hour of Corsica's extremest peril, retired to England, and died in philosophic exile. Neither Giudice nor Sampiero would have acted thus. The more forlorn the hope, the more they struggled.

Among the old Corsican customs which are fast dying out, but

which still linger in the remote valleys of Niolo and Vico, is the *vócero*, or funeral chant, improvised by women at funerals over the bodies of the dead. Nothing illustrates the ferocious temper and savage passions of the race better than these *vóceri*, many of which have been written down and preserved. Most of them are songs of vengeance and imprecation mingled with hyperbolic laments and utterances of extravagant grief poured forth by wives and sisters at the side of murdered husbands and brothers. The women who sing them seem to have lost all milk of human kindness, and to have exchanged the virtues of their sex for Spartan fortitude and the rage of furies. While we read their turbid lines we are carried in imagination to one of the cheerless houses of Bastelica or Bocognano, overshadowed by its mournful chestnut-tree, on which the blood of the murdered man is yet red. The *gridata*, or wake, is assembled in a dark room. On the wooden board, called *tola*, the corpse lies stretched; and round it are women, veiled in the blue-black mantle of Corsican costume, moaning and rocking themselves upon their chairs. The *pasto* or *conforto* (food supplied for mourners) stands upon a side-table, and round the room are men with savage eyes and bristling beards, armed to the teeth, keen for vengeance. The dead man's musket and pocket-pistol lie beside him, and his bloody shirt is hung up at his head. Suddenly the silence, hitherto only disturbed by suppressed groans and muttered curses, is broken by a sharp cry. A woman rises. It is the sister of the dead man. She seizes his shirt and, holding it aloft with Mænad gestures and frantic screams, gives rhythmic utterance to her grief and rage. "I was spinning when I heard a great noise: it was a gunshot, which went into my heart, and seemed a voice that cried 'Run, thy brother is dying.' I ran into the room above; I took the blow into my breast; I said 'Now he is dead, there is nothing to give me comfort. Who will undertake thy ven-

geance? When I show thy shirt, who will vow to let his beard grow till the murderer is slain? Who is there left to do it? A mother near her death? A sister? Of all our race there is only left a woman without kin, poor, orphan, and a girl. Yet, O my brother, never fear! For thy vengeance thy sister is enough!

Ma per fà la to bindetta,
Sta siguru, basta anch ella!

Give me the pistol; I will shoulder the gun; I will away to the hills. My brother, heart of thy sister, thou shalt be avenged!" A *vócero* declaimed upon the bier of Giammatteo and Pasquale, two cousins, by the sister of the former, is still fiercer and more energetic in its malediction. This Erinnys of revenge prays Christ and all the saints to extirpate the murderer's whole race, to shrivel it up till it passes from the earth. Then, with a sudden and vehement transition to the pathos of her own sorrow, she exclaims:

Halla mai bista nissunu
Tumbà l'omi pe li cantì?

It appears from these words that Giammatteo's enemies had killed him because they were jealous of his skill in singing. Shortly after she curses the curate of the village, a kinsman of the murderer, for refusing to toll the funeral bells; and at last, all other threads of rage and sorrow being twined and knotted into one, she gives loose to her raging thirst for blood: "If only I had a son, to train like a sleuth-hound, that he might track the murderer! Oh, if I had a son! Oh, if I had a lad!" Her words seem to choke her, and she swoons, and remains for a short time insensible. When the Bacchante of revenge awakes, it is with milder feelings in her heart: "O brother mine, Matteo! art thou sleeping? Here I will rest with thee and weep till day-break." It is rare to find in literature so crude and intense an

expression of fiery hatred as these untranslatable *vóceri* present. The emotion is so simple and so strong that it becomes sublime by mere force, and affects us with a strange pathos when contrasted with the tender affection conveyed in such terms of endearment as "my dove," "my flower," "my pheasant," "my bright-painted orange," addressed to the dead. In the *vóceri* it often happens that there are several interlocutors: one friend questions and another answers; or a kinswoman of the murderer attempts to justify the deed, and is overwhelmed with deadly imprecations. Passionate appeals are made to the corpse: "Arise! Do you not hear the women cry? Stand up. Show your wounds, and let the fountains of your blood flow! Alas! he is dead; he sleeps; he cannot hear!" Then they turn again to tears and curses, feeling that no help or comfort can come from the clay-cold form. The intensity of grief finds strange language for its utterance. A girl, mourning over her father, cries:

Mi l'hannu crucifissatu
Cume Ghiesu Cristu in croce.

Once only, in Viale's collection, does any friend of the dead remember mercy. It is an old woman, who points to the crucifix above the bier.

But all the *vóceri* are not so murderous. Several are composed for girls who died unwedded and before their time, by their mothers or companions. The language of these laments is far more tender and ornate. They praise the gentle virtues and beauty of the girl, her piety and helpful household ways. The most affecting of these dirges is that which celebrates the death of Romana, daughter of Dariola Danesi. Here is a pretty picture of the girl: "Among the best and fairest maidens you were like a rose among flowers, like the moon among stars; so far more lovely were you than the loveliest. The youths in your presence were like lighted

torches, but full of reverence; you were courteous to all, but with none familiar. In church they gazed at you, but you looked at none of them; and after mass you said, 'Mother, let us go.' Oh! who will console me for your loss? Why did the Lord so much desire you? But now you rest in heaven, all joy and smiles; for the world was not worthy of so fair a face. Oh, how far more beautiful will Paradise be now!" Then follows a piteous picture of the old bereaved mother, to whom a year will seem a thousand years, who will wander among relatives without affection, neighbors without love; and who, when sickness comes, will have no one to give her a drop of water, or to wipe the sweat from her brow, or to hold her hand in death. Yet all that is left for her is to wait and pray for the end, that she may join again her darling.

But it is time to return to Ajaccio itself. At present the attractions and ornaments of the town consist of a good public library, Cardinal Fesch's large but indifferent collection of pictures, two monuments erected to Napoleon, and Napoleon's house. It will always be the chief pride of Ajaccio that she gave birth to the great emperor. Close to the harbor, in a public square by the sea-beach, stands an equestrian statue of the conqueror, surrounded by his four brothers on foot. They are all attired in Roman fashion, and are turned seaward, to the west, as if to symbolize the emigration of this family to subdue Europe. There is something ludicrous and forlorn in the stiffness of the group—something even pathetic, when we think how Napoleon gazed seaward from another island, no longer on horseback, no longer laurel-crowned, an unthroned, unseated conqueror, on St. Helena. His father's house stands close by. An old Italian waiting-woman, who had been long in the service of the Murats, keeps it and shows it. She has the manners of a lady, and can tell many stories of the various members of the Bonaparte family.

Those who fancy that Napoleon was born in a mean dwelling of poor parents will be surprised to find so much space and elegance in these apartments. Of course his family was not rich by comparison with the riches of French or English nobles. But for Corsicans they were well-to-do, and their house has an air of antique dignity. The chairs of the entrance-saloon have been literally stripped of their coverings by enthusiastic visitors; the horse-hair stuffing underneath protrudes itself with a sort of comic pride, as if protesting that it came to be so tattered in an honorable service. Some of the furniture seems new; but many old presses, inlaid with marbles, agates, and lapis-lazuli, such as Italian families preserve for generations, have an air of respectable antiquity about them. Nor is there any doubt that the young Napoleon led his minuets beneath the stiff girandoles of the formal dancing-room. There, too, in a dark back chamber, is the bed in which he was born. At its foot is a photograph of the present Prince Imperial sent by the Empress Eugenie, who, when she visited the room, wept much—*pianse molto* (to use the old lady's phrase)—at seeing the place where such lofty destinies began. On the wall of the same room is a portrait of Napoleon himself as the young general of the republic—with the citizen's unkempt hair, the fierce fire of the Revolution in his eyes, a frown upon his forehead, lips compressed, and quivering nostrils; also one of his mother, the pastille of a handsome woman, with Napoleonic eyes and brows and nose, but with a vacant simpering mouth. Perhaps the provincial artist knew not how to seize the expression of this feature, the most difficult to draw. For we cannot fancy that Letitia had lips without the firmness or the fulness of a majestic nature.

The whole first story of this house belonged to the Bonaparte family. The windows look out partly on a little court and partly on narrow streets. It was, no doubt, the memory of this home

that made Napoleon, when emperor, design schemes for the good of Corsica—schemes that might have brought him more honor than many conquests, but which he had no time or leisure to carry out. On St. Helena his mind often reverted to them, and he would speak of the gummy odors of the macchi wafted from the hill-sides to the sea-shore.

FLORENCE AND THE MEDICI.

"Di Firenze in prima si divisono intra loro i nobili, dipoi i nobili e il popolo, e in ultimo il popolo e la plebe; e molte volte occorse che una di queste parti rimasa superiore, si divise in due."—MACHIAVELLI.

I.

FLORENCE, like all Italian cities, owed her independence to the duel of the papacy and empire. The transference of the imperial authority beyond the Alps had enabled the burghs of Lombardy and Tuscany to establish a form of self-government. This government was based upon the old municipal organization of duumvirs and decemvirs. It was, in fact, nothing more or less than a survival from the ancient Roman system. The proof of this was that, while vindicating their rights as towns, the free cities never questioned the validity of the imperial title. Even after the peace of Constance in 1183, when Frederick Barbarossa acknowledged their autonomy, they received within their walls a supreme magistrate, with power of life and death and ultimate appeal in all decisive questions, whose title of Potestà indicated that he represented the imperial power—Potestas. It was not by the assertion of any right, so much as by the growth of custom, and by the weakness of the emperors, that in course of time each city became a sovereign State. The theoretical supremacy of the empire prevented any other authority from taking the first place in Italy. On the other hand, the practical inefficiency of the emperors to play their part encouraged the establishment of numerous minor powers amenable to no controlling discipline.

The free cities derived their strength from industry, and had nothing in common with the nobles of the surrounding country. Broadly speaking, the population of the towns included what remained in Italy of the old Roman people. This Roman stock was nowhere stronger than in Florence and Venice—Florence defended from barbarian incursions by her mountains and marshes, Venice by the isolation of her lagoons. The nobles, on the contrary, were mostly of foreign origin—Germans, Franks, and Lombards, who had established themselves as feudal lords in castles apart from the cities. The force which the burghs acquired as industrial communities was soon turned against these nobles. The larger cities, like Milan and Florence, began to make war upon the lords of castles, and to absorb into their own territory the small towns and villages around them. Thus in the social economy of the Italians there were two antagonistic elements ready to range themselves beneath any banners that should give the form of legitimate warfare to their mutual hostility. It was the policy of the Church in the twelfth century to support the cause of the cities, using them as a weapon against the empire, and stimulating the growing ambition of the burghers. In this way Italy came to be divided into the two world-famous factions known as Guelf and Ghibelline. The struggle between Guelf and Ghibelline was the struggle of the papacy for the depression of the empire, the struggle of the great burghs face to face with feudalism, the struggle of the old Italic stock enclosed in cities with the foreign nobles established in fortresses. When the Church had finally triumphed by the extirpation of the house of Hohenstaufen, this conflict of Guelf and Ghibelline was really ended. Until the reign of Charles V. no emperor interfered to any purpose in Italian affairs. At the same time the popes ceased to wield a formidable power. Having won the battle by calling in the French, they suffered the consequences of this policy by losing

their hold on Italy during the long period of their exile at Avignon. The Italians, left without either pope or emperor, were free to pursue their course of internal development, and to prosecute their quarrels among themselves. But though the names of Guelf and Ghibelline lost their old significance after the year 1266 (the date of King Manfred's death), these two factions had so divided Italy that they continued to play a prominent part in her annals. Guelf still meant constitutional autonomy, meant the burgher as against the noble, meant industry as opposed to feudal lordship. Ghibelline meant the rule of the few over the many, meant tyranny, meant the interest of the noble as against the merchant and the citizen. These broad distinctions must be borne in mind, if we seek to understand how it was that a city like Florence continued to be governed by parties, the European force of which had passed away.

II.

Florence first rose into importance during the papacy of Innocent III. Up to this date she had been a town of second-rate distinction even in Tuscany. Pisa was more powerful by arms and commerce. Lucca was the old seat of the dukes and marquises of Tuscany. But between the years 1200 and 1250 Florence assumed the place she was to hold thenceforward, by heading the league of Tuscan cities formed to support the Guelf party against the Ghibellines. Formally adopting the Guelf cause, the Florentines made themselves the champions of municipal liberty in Central Italy; and while they declared war against the Ghibelline cities, they endeavored to stamp out the very name of noble in their State. It is not needful to describe the varying fortunes of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the burghers and the nobles, during the thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth centuries. Suffice it to say that through all the vicissitudes of that stormy pe-

riod the name Guelf became more and more associated with republican freedom in Florence. At last, after the final triumph of that party in 1253, the Guelfs remained victors in the city. Associating the glory of their independence with Guelf principles, the citizens of Florence perpetuated within their State a faction that, in its turn, was destined to prove perilous to liberty.

When it became clear that the republic was to rule itself henceforth untrammelled by imperial interference, the people divided themselves into six districts, and chose for each district two Ancients, who administered the government in concert with the Potestà and the Captain of the People. The Ancients were a relic of the old Roman municipal organization. The Potestà, who was invariably a noble foreigner selected by the people, represented the extinct imperial right, and exercised the power of life and death within the city. The Captain of the People, who was also a foreigner, headed the burghers in their military capacity, for at that period the troops were levied from the citizens themselves in twenty companies. The body of the citizens, or the *popolo*, were ultimately sovereigns in the State. Assembled under the banners of their several companies, they formed a *parlamento* for delegating their own power to each successive government. Their representatives, again, arranged in two councils, called the Council of the People and the Council of the Commune, under the presidency of the Captain of the People and the Potestà, ratified the measures which had previously been proposed and carried by the executive authority or Signoria. Under this simple State system the Florentines placed themselves at the head of the Tuscan League, fought the battles of the Church, asserted their sovereignty by issuing the golden florin of the republic, and flourished until 1266.

III.

In that year an important change was effected in the Constitution. The whole population of Florence consisted, on the one hand, of nobles or Grandi, as they were called in Tuscany, and on the other hand of working people. The latter, divided into traders and handicraftsmen, were distributed in guilds called Arti; and at that time there were seven Greater and five Lesser Arti, the most influential of all being the Guild of the Wool Merchants. These guilds had their halls for meeting, their colleges of chief officers, their heads, called Consoli or Priors, and their flags. In 1266 it was decided that the administration of the commonwealth should be placed simply and wholly in the hands of the Arti, and the Priors of these industrial companies became the lords of Signory of Florence. No inhabitant of the city who had not enrolled himself as a craftsman in one of the guilds could exercise any function of burghership. To be *scioperato*, or without industry, was to be without power, without rank or place of honor in the State. The revolution which placed the Arts at the head of the republic had the practical effect of excluding the Grandi altogether from the government. Violent efforts were made by these noble families, potent through their territorial possessions and foreign connections, and trained from boyhood in the use of arms, to recover the place from which the new laws thrust them; but their menacing attitude, instead of intimidating the burghers, roused their anger and drove them to the passing of still more stringent laws. In 1293, after the Ghibellines had been defeated in the great battle of Campaldino, a series of severe enactments, called the Ordinances of Justice, were decreed against the unruly Grandi. All civic rights were taken from them; the severest penalties were attached to their slightest infringement of municipal law; their titles to land were limited; the privilege of living within the city

walls was allowed them only under galling restrictions; and, last not least, a supreme magistrate, named the Gonfalonier of Justice, was created for the special purpose of watching them and carrying out the penal code against them. Henceforward Florence was governed exclusively by merchants and artisans. The Grandi hastened to enroll themselves in the guilds, exchanging their former titles and dignities for the solid privilege of burghership. The exact parallel to this industrial constitution for a commonwealth, carrying on wars with emperors and princes, holding haughty captains in its pay, and dictating laws to subject cities, cannot, I think, be elsewhere found in history. It is as unique as the Florence of Dante and Giotto is unique. While the people was guarding itself thus stringently against the Grandi, a separate body was created for the special purpose of extirpating the Ghibellines. A permanent committee of vigilance, called the College or the Captains of the Guelf Party, was established. It was their function to administer the forfeited possessions of Ghibelline rebels, to hunt out suspected citizens, to prosecute them for Ghibellinism, to judge them, and to punish them as traitors to the commonwealth. This body, like a little State within the State, proved formidable to the republic itself through the unlimited and undefined sway it exercised over burghers whom it chose to tax with treason. In course of time it became the oligarchical element within the Florentine democracy, and threatened to change the free constitution of the city into a government conducted by a few powerful families.

There is no need to dwell in detail on the internal difficulties of Florence during the first half of the fourteenth century. Two main circumstances, however, require to be briefly noticed. These are (1) the contest of the Blacks and Whites, so famous through the part played in it by Dante; and (2) the tyranny of the Duke of Athens, Walter de Brienne. The feuds of the Blacks and

Whites broke up the city into factions, and produced such anarchy that at last it was found necessary to place the republic under the protection of foreign potentates. Charles of Valois was first chosen, and after him the Duke of Athens, who took up his residence in the city. Intrusted with dictatorial authority, he used his power to form a military despotism. Though his reign of violence lasted rather less than a year, it bore important fruits; for the tyrant, seeking to support himself upon the favor of the common people, gave political power to the Lesser Arts at the expense of the Greater, and confused the old State system by enlarging the democracy. The net result of these events for Florence was, first, that the city became habituated to rancorous party strife, involving exiles and proscriptions; and, secondly, that it lost its primitive social hierarchy of classes.

IV.

After the Guelfs had conquered the Ghibellines, and the people had absorbed the Grandi in their guilds, the next chapter in the troubled history of Florence was the division of the Popolo against itself. Civil strife now declared itself as a conflict between labor and capital. The members of the Lesser Arts, craftsmen who plied trades subordinate to those of the Greater Arts, rose up against their social and political superiors, demanding a larger share in the government, a more equal distribution of profits, higher wages, and privileges that should place them on an absolute equality with the wealthy merchants. It was in the year 1378 that the proletariat broke out into rebellion. Previous events had prepared the way for this revolt. First of all, the republic had been democratized through the destruction of the Grandi and through the popular policy pursued to gain his own ends by the Duke of Athens. Secondly, society had been shaken to its very foundation by the great plague of 1348. Both Boc-

caccio and Matteo Villani draw lively pictures of the relaxed morality and loss of order consequent upon this terrible disaster; nor had thirty years sufficed to restore their relative position to grades and ranks confounded by an overwhelming calamity. We may therefore reckon the great plague of 1348 among the causes which produced the anarchy of 1378. Rising in a mass to claim their privileges, the artisans ejected the Signory from the Public Palace, and for a while Florence was at the mercy of the mob. It is worthy of notice that the Medici, whose name is scarcely known before this epoch, now came for one moment to the front. Salvestro de' Medici was Gonfalonier of Justice at the time when the tumult first broke out. He followed the faction of the handicraftsmen, and became the hero of the day. I cannot discover that he did more than extend a sort of passive protection to their cause. Yet there is no doubt that the attachment of the working-classes to the house of Medici dates from this period. The rebellion of 1378 is known in Florentine history as the Tumult of the Ciompi. The name Ciompi strictly means the Wool-carders. One set of operatives in the city, and that the largest, gave its title to the whole body of the laborers. For some months these craftsmen governed the republic, appointing their own Signory and passing laws in their own interest; but, as is usual, the proletariat found itself incapable of sustained government. The ambition and discontent of the Ciompi foamed themselves away, and industrious working-men began to see that trade was languishing and credit on the wane. By their own act at last they restored the government to the Priors of the Greater Arti. Still the movement had not been without grave consequences. It completed the levelling of classes, which had been steadily advancing from the first in Florence. After the Ciompi riot there was no longer not only any distinction between noble and burgher, but the distinction between greater and lesser guilds was practi-

cally swept away. The classes, parties, and degrees in the republic were so broken up, ground down, and mingled, that thenceforth the true source of power in the State was wealth combined with personal ability. In other words, the proper political conditions had been formed for unscrupulous adventurers. Florence had become a democracy without social organization, which might fall a prey to oligarchs or despots. What remained of deeply rooted feuds or factions—animosities against the Grandi, hatred for the Ghibellines, jealousy of labor and capital—offered so many points of leverage for stirring the passions of the people and for covering personal ambition with a cloak of public zeal. The time was come for the Albizzi to attempt an oligarchy, and for the Medici to begin the enslavement of the State.

V.

The Constitution of Florence offered many points of weakness to the attacks of such intriguers. In the first place it was in its origin not a political but an industrial organization—a simple group of guilds invested with the sovereign authority. Its two most powerful engines, the Gonfalonier of Justice and the Guelf College, had been formed, not with a view to the preservation of the government, but with the purpose of quelling the nobles and excluding a detested faction. It had no permanent head, like the Doge of Venice; no fixed senate like the Venetian Grand Council; its chief magistrates, the Signory, were elected for short periods of two months, and their mode of election was open to the gravest criticism. Supposed to be chosen by lot, they were really selected from lists drawn up by the factions in power from time to time. These factions contrived to exclude the names of all but their adherents from the bags, or *borse*, in which the burghers eligible for election had to be inscribed. Furthermore, it was not possible for this shifting Signory to conduct affairs re-

quiring sustained effort and secret deliberation; therefore recourse was being continually had to dictatorial Commissions. The people, summoned in parliament upon the Great Square, were asked to confer plenipotentiary authority upon a committee called *Balia*, who proceeded to do what they chose in the State, and who retained power after the emergency for which they were created passed away. The same instability in the supreme magistracy led to the appointment of special commissioners for war, and special councils, or *Pratiche*, for the management of each department. Such supplementary commissions not only proved the weakness of the central authority, but they were always liable to be made the instruments of party warfare. The Guelf College was another and a different source of danger to the State. Not acting under the control of the Signory, but using its own initiative, this powerful body could proscribe and punish burghers on the mere suspicion of Ghibellinism. Though the Ghibelline faction had become an empty name, the Guelf College excluded from the franchise all and every whom they chose on any pretext to admonish. Under this mild phrase, *to admonish*, was concealed a cruel exercise of tyranny—it meant to warn a man that he was suspected of treason, and that he had better relinquish the exercise of his burghership. By free use of this engine of admonition, the Guelf College rendered their enemies voiceless in the State, and were able to pack the Signory and the councils with their own creatures. Another important defect in the Florentine Constitution was the method of imposing taxes. This was done by no regular system. The party in power made what estimate it chose of a man's capacity to bear taxation, and called upon him for extraordinary loans. In this way citizens were frequently driven into bankruptcy and exile; and since to be a debtor to the State deprived a burgher of his civic rights, severe taxation was one of the best ways of silencing and neutralizing a dissident.

I have enumerated these several causes of weakness in the Florentine State system, partly because they show how irregularly the Constitution had been formed by the patching and extension of a simple industrial machine to suit the needs of a great commonwealth; partly because it was through these defects that the democracy merged gradually into a despotism. The art of the Medici consisted in a scientific comprehension of these very imperfections, a methodic use of them for their own purposes, and a steady opposition to any attempts made to substitute a stricter system. The Florentines had determined to be an industrial community, governing themselves on the co-operative principle, dividing profits, sharing losses, and exposing their magistrates to rigid scrutiny. All this in theory was excellent. Had they remained an unambitious and peaceful commonwealth, engaged in the wool and silk trade, it might have answered. Modern Europe might have admired the model of a communistic and commercial democracy. But when they engaged in aggressive wars, and sought to enslave sister cities like Pisa and Lucca, it was soon found that their simple trading constitution would not serve. They had to piece it out with subordinate machinery, cumbrous, difficult to manage, ill adapted to the original structure. Each limb of this subordinate machinery, moreover, was a *point d'appui* for insidious and self-seeking party leaders.

Florence, in the middle of the fourteenth century, was a vast beehive of industry. Distinctions of rank among burghers, qualified to vote and hold office, where theoretically unknown. Highly educated men, of more than princely wealth, spent their time in shops and counting-houses, and trained their sons to follow trades. Military service at this period was abandoned by the citizens; they preferred to pay mercenary troops for the conduct of their wars. Nor was there, as in Venice, any outlet for their energies upon the seas. Florence had no navy, no great port—she only

kept a small fleet for the protection of her commerce. Thus the vigor of the commonwealth was concentrated on itself; while the influence of the citizens, through their affiliated trading-houses, correspondents, and agents, extended like a network over Europe. In a community of this kind it was natural that wealth—rank and titles being absent—should alone confer distinction. Accordingly we find that out of the very bosom of the people a new plutocratic aristocracy begins to rise. The Grandi are no more; but certain families achieve distinction by their riches, their numbers, their high spirit, and their ancient place of honor in the State. These nobles of the purse obtained the name of *Popolani Nobili*; and it was they who now began to play at high stakes for the supreme power. In all the subsequent vicissitudes of Florence every change takes place by intrigue and by clever manipulation of the political machine. Recourse is rarely had to violence of any kind, and the leaders of revolutions are men of the yard-measure, never of the sword. The despotism to which the republic eventually succumbed was no less commercial than the democracy had been. Florence in the days of her slavery remained a *Popolo*.

VI.

The opening of the second half of the fourteenth century had been signalized by the feuds of two great houses, both risen from the people. These were the Albizzi and the Ricci. At this epoch there had been a formal closing of the lists of burghers; henceforth no new families who might settle in the city could claim the franchise, vote in the assemblies, or hold magistracies. The Guelf College used their old engine of admonition to persecute *novi homines*, whom they dreaded as opponents. At the head of this formidable organization the Albizzi placed themselves, and worked it with such skill that they succeeded in driving the Ricci out of all participation in the government. The tumult of the

Ciampi formed but an episode in their career towards oligarchy ; indeed, that revolution only rendered the political material of the Florentine republic more plastic in the hands of intriguers, by removing the last vestiges of class distinctions and by confusing the old parties of the State.

When the Florentines in 1387 engaged in their long duel with Gian Galeazzo Visconti, the difficulty of conducting this war without some permanent central authority still further confirmed the power of the rising oligarchs. The Albizzi became daily more autocratic, until in 1393 their chief, Maso degli Albizzi, a man of strong will and prudent policy, was chosen Gonfalonier of Justice. Assuming the sway of a dictator, he revised the list of burghers capable of holding office, struck out the private opponents of his house, and excluded all names but those of powerful families who were well affected towards an aristocratic government. The great house of the Alberti were exiled in a body, declared rebels, and deprived of their possessions, for no reason except that they seemed dangerous to the Albizzi. It was in vain that the people murmured against these arbitrary acts. The new rules were omnipotent in the Signory, which they packed with their own men, in the great guilds, and in the Gueff College. All the machinery invented by the industrial community for its self-management and self-defence was controlled and manipulated by a close body of aristocrats, with the Albizzi at their head. It seemed as though Florence, without any visible alteration in her forms of government, was rapidly becoming an oligarchy even less open than the Venetian republic. Meanwhile the affairs of the State were most flourishing. The strong-handed masters of the city not only held the Duke of Milan in check, and prevented him from turning Italy into a kingdom ; they furthermore acquired the cities of Pisa, Livorno, Arezzo, Montepulciano, and Cortona for Florence, making her the mistress of all Tuscany, with the exception of

Siena, Lucca, and Volterra. Maso degli Albizzi was the ruling spirit of the commonwealth, spending the enormous sum of 11,500,000 golden florins on war, raising sumptuous edifices, protecting the arts, and acting in general like a powerful and irresponsible prince.

In spite of public prosperity, there were signs, however, that this rule of a few families could not last. Their government was only maintained by continual revision of the lists of burghers, by elimination of the disaffected, and by unremitting personal industry. They introduced no new machinery into the Constitution whereby the people might be deprived of its titular sovereignty, or their own dictatorship might be continued with a semblance of legality. Again, they neglected to win over the new nobles (*nobili popolani*) in a body to their cause; and thus they were surrounded by rivals ready to spring upon them when a false step should be made. The Albizzi oligarchy was a masterpiece of art, without any force to sustain it but the craft and energy of its constructors. It had not grown up, like the Venetian oligarchy, by the gradual assimilation to itself of all the vigor in the State. It was bound, sooner or later, to yield to the nascent impulse of democracy inherent in Florentine institutions.

VII.

Maso degli Albizzi died in 1417. He was succeeded in the government by his old friend, Niccolo da Uzzano, a man of great eloquence and wisdom, whose single word swayed the councils of the people as he listed. Together with him acted Maso's son, Rinaldo, a youth of even more brilliant talents than his father, frank, noble, and high-spirited, but far less cautious.

The oligarchy, which these two men undertook to manage, had accumulated against itself the discontent of overtaxed, disfran-

chised, jealous burghers. The times, too, were bad. Pursuing the policy of Maso, the Albizzi engaged the city in a tedious and unsuccessful war with Filippo Maria Visconti, which cost 350,000 golden florins, and brought no credit. In order to meet extraordinary expenses, they raised new public loans, thereby depreciating the value of the old Florentine funds. What was worse, they imposed forced subsidies with grievous inequality upon the burghers, passing over their friends and adherents, and burdening their opponents with more than could be borne. This imprudent financial policy began the ruin of the Albizzi. It caused a clamor in the city for a new system of more just taxation, which was too powerful to be resisted. The voice of the people made itself loudly heard; and with the people on this occasion sided Giovanni de' Medici. This was in 1427.

It is here that the Medici appear upon that memorable scene where in the future they are to play the first part. Giovanni de' Medici did not belong to the same branch of his family as the Salvestro who favored the people at the time of the Ciompi Tumult. But he adopted the same popular policy. To his sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo, he bequeathed on his death-bed the rule that they should invariably adhere to the cause of the multitude, found their influence on that, and avoid the arts of factious and ambitious leaders. In his own life he had pursued this course of conduct, acquiring a reputation for civic moderation and impartiality that endeared him to the people and stood his children in good stead. Early in his youth Giovanni found himself almost destitute by reason of the imposts charged upon him by the oligarchs. He possessed, however, the genius for money-making to a rare degree, and passed his manhood as a banker, amassing the largest fortune of any private citizen in Italy. In his old age he devoted himself to the organization of his colossal trading business, and abstained, as far as possible, from political intrigues. Men ob-

served that they rarely met him in the Public Palace or on the Great Square.

Cosimo de' Medici was thirty years old when his father, Giovanni, died, in 1429. During his youth he had devoted all his time and energy to business, mastering the complicated affairs of Giovanni's banking-house, and travelling far and wide through Europe to extend its connections. This education made him a consummate financier; and those who knew him best were convinced that his ambition was set on great things. However quietly he might begin, it was clear that he intended to match himself, as a leader of the plebeians, against the Albizzi. The foundations he prepared for future action were equally characteristic of the man, of Florence, and of the age. Commanding the enormous capital of the Medicean bank, he contrived, at any sacrifice of temporary convenience, to lend money to the State for war expenses, engrossing in his own hands a large portion of the public debt of Florence. At the same time his agencies in various European capitals enabled him to keep his own wealth floating far beyond the reach of foes within the city. A few years of this system ended in so complete a confusion between Cosimo's trade and the finances of Florence that the bankruptcy of the Medici, however caused, would have compromised the credit of the State and the fortunes of the fund-holders. Cosimo, in a word, made himself necessary to Florence by the wise use of his riches. Furthermore, he kept his eye upon the list of burghers, lending money to needy citizens, putting good things in the way of struggling traders, building up the fortunes of men who were disposed to favor his party in the State, ruining his opponents by the legitimate process of commercial competition, and, when occasion offered, introducing new voters into the Florentine Council by paying off the debts of those who were disqualified by poverty from using the franchise. While his capital was continually increasing,

he lived frugally, and employed his wealth solely for the consolidation of his political influence. By these arts Cosimo became formidable to the oligarchs and beloved by the people. His supporters were numerous, and held together by the bonds of immediate necessity or personal cupidity. The plebeians and the merchants were all on his side. The Grandi and the Ammoniti, excluded from the State by the practices of the Albizzi, had more to hope from the Medicean party than from the few families who still contrived to hold the reins of government. It was clear that a conflict to the death must soon commence between the oligarchy and this new faction.

VIII.

At last, in 1433, war was declared. The first blow was struck by Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who put himself in the wrong by attacking a citizen indispensable to the people at large, and guilty of no unconstitutional act. On September 7th of that year, a year decisive for the future destinies of Florence, he summoned Cosimo to the Public Palace, which he had previously occupied with troops at his command. There he declared him a rebel to the State, and had him imprisoned in a little square room in the central tower. The tocsin was sounded; the people were assembled in parliament upon the piazza. The Albizzi held the main streets with armed men, and forced the Florentines to place plenipotentiary power for the administration of the commonwealth at this crisis in the hands of a Balìa, or committee selected by themselves. It was always thus that acts of high tyranny were effected in Florence. A show of legality was secured by gaining the compulsory sanction of the people, driven by soldiery into the public square, and hastily ordered to recognize the authority of their oppressors.

The bill of indictment against the Medici accused them of se-

dition in the year 1378, that is, in the year of the Ciompi Tumult, and of treasonable practice during the whole course of the Albizzi administration. It also strove to fix upon them the odium of the unsuccessful war against the town of Lucca. As soon as the Albizzi had unmasked their batteries, Lorenzo de' Medici managed to escape from the city, and took with him his brother Cosimo's children to Venice. Cosimo remained shut up within the little room called Barberia in Arnolfo's tower. From that high eagle's nest the sight can range Valdarno far and wide. Florence with her towers and domes lies below; and the blue peaks of Carrara close a prospect westward than which, with its villa-jewelled slopes and fertile gardens, there is naught more beautiful upon the face of earth. The prisoner can have paid but little heed to this fair landscape. He heard the frequent ringing of the great bell that called the Florentines to council, the tramp of armed men on the piazza, the coming and going of the burghers in the palace halls beneath. On all sides lurked anxiety and fear of death. Each mouthful he tasted might be poisoned. For many days he partook of only bread and water, till his jailer restored his confidence by sharing all his meals. In this peril he abode twenty-four days. The Albizzi, in concert with the Balia they had formed, were consulting what they might venture to do with him. Some voted for his execution. Others feared the popular favor, and thought that if they killed Cosimo this act would ruin their own power. The nobler natures among them determined to proceed by constitutional measures. At last, upon September 29th, it was settled that Cosimo should be exiled to Padua for ten years. The Medici were declared Grandi, by way of excluding them from political rights. But their property remained untouched; and on October 3d Cosimo was released.

On the same day Cosimo took his departure. His journey northward resembled a triumphant progress. He left Florence a

simple burgher; he entered Venice a powerful prince. Though the Albizzi seemed to have gained the day, they had really cut away the ground beneath their feet. They committed the fatal mistake of doing both too much and too little—too much because they declared war against an innocent man, and roused the sympathies of the whole people in his behalf; too little, because they had not the nerve to complete their act by killing him outright and extirpating his party. Machiavelli, in one of his profoundest and most cynical critiques, remarks that few men know how to be thoroughly bad with honor to themselves. Their will is evil; but the grain of good in them—some fear of public opinion, some repugnance to committing a signal crime—paralyzes their arm at the moment when it ought to have been raised to strike. He instances Gian Paolo Baglioni's omission to murder Julius II., when that pope placed himself within his clutches at Perugia. He might also have instanced Rinaldo degli Albizzi's refusal to push things to extremities by murdering Cosimo. It was the combination of despotic violence in the exile of Cosimo with constitutional moderation in the preservation of his life that betrayed the weakness of the oligarchs and restored confidence to the Medicean party.

IX.

In the course of the year 1434 this party began to hold up its head. Powerful as the Albizzi were, they only retained the government by artifice; and now they had done a deed which put at naught their former arts and intrigues. A Signory favorable to the Medici came into office, and on September 26, 1434, Rinaldo in his turn was summoned to the palace and declared a rebel. He strove to raise the forces of his party, and entered the piazza at the head of eight hundred men. The menacing attitude of the people, however, made resistance perilous. Rinaldo disbanded his troops, and placed himself under the protection of Pope Eu-

genius IV., who was then resident in Florence. This act of submission proved that Rinaldo had not the courage or the cruelty to try the chance of civil war. Whatever his motives may have been, he lost his hold upon the State beyond recovery. On September 29th, a new parliament was summoned; on October 2d, Cosimo was recalled from exile and the Albizzi were banished. The intercession of the Pope procured for them nothing but the liberty to leave Florence unmolested. Rinaldo turned his back upon the city he had governed, never to set foot in it again. On October 6th, Cosimo, having passed through Padua, Ferrara, and Modena like a conqueror, re-entered the town amid the plaudits of the people, and took up his dwelling as an honored guest in the Palace of the Republic. The subsequent history of Florence is the history of his family. In after-years the Medici loved to remember this return of Cosimo. His triumphal reception was painted in fresco on the walls of their villa at Cajano under the transparent allegory of Cicero's entrance into Rome.

X.

By their brief exile the Medici had gained the credit of injured innocence, the fame of martyrdom in the popular cause. Their foes had struck the first blow, and in striking at them had seemed to aim against the liberties of the republic. The mere failure of their adversaries to hold the power they had acquired handed over this power to the Medici; and the reprisals which the Medici began to take had the show of justice, not of personal hatred or of petty vengeance. Cosimo was a true Florentine. He disliked violence, because he knew that blood spilt cries for blood. His passions, too, were cool and temperate. No gust of anger, no intoxication of success, destroyed his balance. His one object, the consolidation of power for his family on the basis of popular favor, was kept steadily in view; and he would do nothing that

might compromise that end. Yet he was neither generous nor merciful. We therefore find that from the first moment of his return to Florence he instituted a system of pitiless and unforgiving persecution against his old opponents. The Albizzi were banished, root and branch, with all their followers, consigned to lonely and often to unwholesome stations through the length and breadth of Italy. If they broke the bonds assigned them, they were forthwith declared traitors and their property was confiscated. After a long series of years, by merely keeping in force the first sentence pronounced upon them, Cosimo had the cruel satisfaction of seeing the whole of that proud oligarchy die out by slow degrees in the insufferable tedium of solitude and exile. Even the high-souled Palla degli Strozzi, who had striven to remain neutral, and whose wealth and talents were devoted to the revival of classical studies, was proscribed because to Cosimo he seemed too powerful. Separated from his children, he died in banishment at Padua. In this way the return of the Medici involved the loss to Florence of some noble citizens, who might perchance have checked the Mediccan tyranny if they had stayed to guide the State. The plebeians, raised to wealth and influence by Cosimo before his exile, now took the lead in the republic. He used these men as cat's-paws, rarely putting himself forward or allowing his own name to appear, but pulling the wires of government in privacy by means of intermediate agents. The Mediccan party was called at first *Puccini*, from a certain Puccio, whose name was better known in caucus or committee than that of his real master.

To rule through these creatures of his own making taxed all the ingenuity of Cosimo; but his profound and subtle intellect was suited to the task, and he found unlimited pleasure in the exercise of his consummate craft. We have already seen to what extent he used his riches for the acquisition of political influence.

Now that he had come to power, he continued the same method, packing the Signory and the Councils with men whom he could hold by debt between his thumb and finger. His command of the public moneys enabled him to wink at peculation in State offices; it was part of his system to bind magistrates and secretaries to his interest by their consciousness of guilt condoned but not forgotten. Not a few, moreover, owed their living to the appointments he procured for them. While he thus controlled the wheel-work of the commonwealth by means of organized corruption, he borrowed the arts of his old enemies to oppress dissentient citizens. If a man took an independent line in voting, and refused allegiance to the Medicean party, he was marked out for persecution. No violence was used; but he found himself hampered in his commerce—money, plentiful for others, became scarce for him; his competitors in trade were subsidized to undersell him. And while the avenues of industry were closed, his fortune was taxed above its value, until he had to sell at a loss in order to discharge his public obligations. In the first twenty years of the Medicean rule, seventy families had to pay 4,875,000 golden florins of extraordinary imposts, fixed by arbitrary assessment.

The more patriotic members of his party looked with dread and loathing on this system of corruption and exclusion. To their remonstrances Cosimo replied in four memorable sayings: "Better the State spoiled than the State not ours." "Governments cannot be carried on with paternosters." "An ell of scarlet makes a burgher." "I aim at finite ends." These maxims represent the whole man—first, in his egotism, eager to gain Florence for his family, at any risk of her ruin; secondly, in his cynical acceptance of base means to selfish ends; thirdly, in his bourgeois belief that money makes a man, and fine clothes suffice for a citizen; fourthly, in his worldly ambition bent on positive success. It was, in fact, his policy to reduce Florence to the condi-

tion of a rotten borough: nor did this policy fail. One notable sign of the influence he exercised was the change which now came over the foreign relations of the republic. Up to the date of his dictatorship Florence had uniformly fought the battle of freedom in Italy. It was the chief merit of the Albizzi oligarchy that they continued the traditions of the mediæval State, and by their vigorous action checked the growth of the Visconti. Though they engrossed the government, they never forgot that they were first of all things Florentines, and only in the second place men who owed their power and influence to office. In a word, they acted like patriotic Tories, like republican patricians. Therefore they would not ally themselves with tyrants or countenance the enslavement of free cities by armed despots. Their subjugation of the Tuscan burghs to Florence was itself part of a grand republican policy. Cosimo changed all this. When the Visconti dynasty ended by the death of Filippo Maria in 1447, there was a chance of restoring the independence of Lombardy. Milan in effect declared herself a republic, and by the aid of Florence she might at this moment have maintained her liberty. Cosimo, however, entered into treaty with Francesco Sforza, supplied him with money, guaranteed him against Florentine interference, and saw with satisfaction how he reduced the duchy to his military tyranny. The Medici were conscious that they, selfishly, had most to gain by supporting despots who in time of need might help them to confirm their own authority. With the same end in view, when the legitimate line of the Bentivogli was extinguished, Cosimo hunted out a bastard pretender of that family, presented him to the chiefs of the Bentivogli faction, and had him placed upon the seat of his supposed ancestors at Bologna. This young man, a certain Santi da Cascese, presumed to be the son of Ercole de' Bentivogli, was an artisan in a wool-factory when Cosimo set eyes upon him. At first Santi refused the dangerous honor of govern-

ing a proud republic; but the intrigues of Cosimo prevailed, and the obscure craftsman ended his days a powerful prince.

By the arts I have attempted to describe, Cosimo in the course of his long life absorbed the forces of the republic into himself. While he shunned the external signs of despotic power, he made himself the master of the State. His complexion was of a pale olive; his stature short; abstemious and simple in his habits, affable in conversation, sparing of speech, he knew how to combine that burgher-like civility for which the Romans praised Augustus with the reality of a despotism all the more difficult to combat because it seemed nowhere and was everywhere. When he died, at the age of seventy-five, in 1464, the people whom he had enslaved, but whom he had neither injured nor insulted, honored him with the title of *Pater Patriæ*. This was inscribed upon his tomb in St. Lorenzo. He left to posterity the fame of a great and generous patron,* the infamy of a cynical, self-seeking, bourgeois tyrant. Such combinations of contradictory qualities were common enough at the time of the Renaissance. Did not Machiavelli spend his days in tavern-brawls and low amours, his nights among the mighty spirits of the dead, with whom, when he had changed his country suit of homespun for the habit of the court, he found himself an honored equal?

XI.

Cosimo had shown consummate skill by governing Florence through a party created and raised to influence by himself. The jealousy of these adherents formed the chief difficulty with which his son Piero had to contend. Unless the Medici could manage

* For an estimate of Cosimo's services to art and literature, his collection of libraries, his great buildings, his generosity to scholars, and his promotion of Greek studies, I may refer to my *Renaissance in Italy*: "The Revival of Learning," chap. iv.

to kick down the ladder whereby they had risen, they ran the risk of losing all. As on a former occasion, so now they profited by the mistakes of their antagonists. Three chief men of their own party, Diotisalvi Neroni, Agnolo Acciaiuoli, and Luca Pitti, determined to shake off the yoke of their masters, and to repay the Medici for what they owed by leading them to ruin. Niccolo Soderini, a patriot, indignant at the slow enslavement of his country, joined them. At first they strove to undermine the credit of the Medici with the Florentines by inducing Piero to call in the moneys placed at interest by his father in the hands of private citizens. This act was unpopular; but it did not suffice to move a revolution. To proceed by constitutional measures against the Medici was judged impolitic. Therefore the conspirators decided to take, if possible, Piero's life. The plot failed, chiefly owing to the coolness and the cunning of the young Lorenzo, Piero's eldest son. Public sympathy was strongly excited against the aggressors. Neroni, Acciaiuoli, and Soderini were exiled. Pitti was allowed to stay, dishonored, powerless, and penniless, in Florence. Meanwhile, the failure of their foes had only served to strengthen the position of the Medici. The ladder had saved them the trouble of kicking it down.

The congratulations addressed on this occasion to Piero and Lorenzo by the ruling powers of Italy show that the Medici were already regarded as princes outside Florence. Lorenzo and Giuliano, the two sons of Piero, travelled abroad to the courts of Milan and Ferrara with the style and state of more than simple citizens. At home they occupied the first place on all occasions of public ceremony, receiving royal visitors on terms of equality, and performing the hospitalities of the republic like men who had been born to represent its dignities. Lorenzo's marriage to Clarice Orsini, of the noble Roman house, was another sign that the Medici were advancing on the way towards despotism. Cosimo had

avoided foreign alliances for his children. His descendants now judged themselves firmly planted enough to risk the odium of a princely match for the sake of the support outside the city they might win.

XII.

Piero de' Medici died in December, 1469. His son Lorenzo was then barely twenty-two years of age. The chiefs of the Medicean party, all-powerful in the State, held a council, in which they resolved to place him in the same position as his father and grandfather. This resolve seems to have been formed after mature deliberation, on the ground that the existing conditions of Italian politics rendered it impossible to conduct the government without a presidential head. Florence, though still a democracy, required a permanent chief to treat on an equality with the princes of the leading cities. Here we may note the prudence of Cosimo's foreign policy. When he helped to establish despots in Milan and Bologna he was rendering the presidency of his own family in Florence necessary.

Lorenzo, having received this invitation, called attention to his youth and inexperience. Yet he did not refuse it; and, after a graceful display of diffidence, he accepted the charge, entering thus upon that famous political career in the course of which he not only established and maintained a balance of power in Italy, with Florence for the central city, but also contrived to remodel the government of the republic in the interest of his own family and to strengthen the Medici by relations with the Papal See.

The extraordinary versatility of this man's intellectual and social gifts, his participation in all the literary and philosophical interests of his century, his large and liberal patronage of art, and the gayety with which he joined the people of Florence in their pastimes—Mayday games and Carnival festivities—strengthened

his hold upon the city in an age devoted to culture and refined pleasure. Whatever was most brilliant in the spirit of the Italian Renaissance seemed to be incarnate in Lorenzo. Not merely as a patron and a *dilettante*, but as a poet and a critic, a philosopher and scholar, he proved himself adequate to the varied intellectual ambitions of his country. Penetrated with the passion for erudition which distinguished Florence in the fifteenth century, familiar with her painters and her sculptors, deeply read in the works of her great poets, he conceived the ideal of infusing the spirit of antique civility into modern life, and of effecting for society what the artists were performing in their own sphere. To preserve the native character of the Florentine genius, while he added the grace of classic form, was the aim to which his tastes and instincts led him. At the same time, while he made himself the master of Florentine revels and the Augustus of Renaissance literature, he took care that beneath his carnival masks and ball-dress should be concealed the chains which he was forging for the republic.

What he lacked, with so much mental brilliancy, was moral greatness. The age he lived in was an age of selfish despots, treacherous generals, godless priests. It was an age of intellectual vigor and artistic creativeness; but it was also an age of mean ambition, sordid policy, and vitiated principles. Lorenzo remained true in all respects to the genius of this age; true to its enthusiasm for antique culture, true to its passion for art, true to its refined love of pleasure; but true also to its petty political intrigues, to its cynical selfishness, to its lack of heroism. For Florence he looked no higher and saw no further than Cosimo had done. If culture was his pastime, the enslavement of the city by bribery and corruption was the hard work of his manhood. As is the case with much Renaissance art, his life was worth more for its decorative detail than for its constructive de-

sign. In richness, versatility, variety, and exquisiteness of execution, it left little to be desired; yet, viewed at a distance, and as a whole, it does not inspire us with a sense of architectonic majesty.

XIII.

Lorenzo's chief difficulties arose from the necessity under which, like Cosimo, he labored of governing the city through its old institutions by means of a party. To keep the members of this party in good temper, and to gain their approval for the alterations he effected in the State machinery of Florence, was the problem of his life. The successful solution of this problem was easier now, after two generations of the Medicean ascendancy, than it had been at first. Meanwhile the people were maintained in good-humor by public shows, ease, plenty, and a general laxity of discipline. The splendor of Lorenzo's foreign alliances and the consideration he received from all the courts of Italy contributed in no small measure to his popularity and security at home. By using his authority over Florence to inspire respect abroad, and by using his foreign credit to impose upon the burghers, Lorenzo displayed the tact of a true Italian diplomatist. His genius for state-craft, as then understood, was indeed of a rare order, equally adapted to the conduct of a complicated foreign policy and to the control of a suspicious and variable commonwealth. In one point alone he was inferior to his grandfather. He neglected commerce, and allowed his banking business to fall into disorder so hopeless that in course of time he ceased to be solvent. Meanwhile his personal expenses, both as a prince in his own palace, and as the representative of majesty in Florence, continually increased. The bankruptcy of the Medici, it had long been foreseen, would involve the public finances in serious confusion. And now, in order to retrieve his fortunes, Lorenzo was not only obliged to repudiate his debts to the exchequer, but

had also to gain complete disposal of the State purse. It was this necessity that drove him to effect the constitutional revolution of 1480, by which he substituted a privy council of seventy members for the old councils of the State, absorbing the chief functions of the commonwealth into this single body, whom he practically nominated at pleasure. The same want of money led to the great scandal of his reign—the plundering of the Monte delle Doti, or State Insurance-Office Fund for securing dowers to the children of its creditors.

XIV.

While tracing the salient points of Lorenzo de' Medici's administration I have omitted to mention the important events which followed shortly after his accession to power in 1469. What happened between that date and 1480 was not only decisive for the future fortunes of the Casa Medici, but it was also eminently characteristic of the perils and the difficulties which beset Italian despots. The year 1471 was signalized by a visit by the Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza of Milan, and his wife Bona of Savoy, to the Medici in Florence. They came attended by their whole court—body-guards on horse and foot, ushers, pages, falconers, grooms, kennel-varlets, and huntsmen. Omitting the mere baggage service, their train counted two thousand horses. To mention this incident would be superfluous, had not so acute an observer as Machiavelli marked it out as a turning-point in Florentine history. Now, for the first time, the democratic commonwealth saw its streets filled with a mob of courtiers. Masques, balls, and tournaments succeeded each other with magnificent variety; and all the arts of Florence were pressed into the service of these festivals. Machiavelli says that the burghers lost the last remnant of their old austerity of manners, and became, like the degenerate Romans, ready to obey the masters who provided

them with brilliant spectacles. They gazed with admiration on the pomp of Italian princes, their dissolute and godless living, their luxury and prodigal expenditure; and when the Medici affected similar habits in the next generation, the people had no courage to resist the invasion of their pleasant vices.

In the same year, 1471, Volterra was reconquered for the Florentines by Frederick of Urbino. The honors of this victory, disgraced by a brutal sack of the conquered city, in violation of its articles of capitulation, were reserved for Lorenzo, who returned in triumph to Florence. More than ever he assumed the prince, and in his person undertook to represent the State.

In the same year, 1471, Francesco della Rovere was raised to the papacy with the memorable name of Sixtus IV. Sixtus was a man of violent temper and fierce passions, restless and impatiently ambitious, bent on the aggrandizement of the beautiful and wanton youths, his nephews. Of these the most aspiring was Girolamo Riario, for whom Sixtus bought the town of Imola from Taddeo Manfredi, in order that he might possess the title of count and the nucleus of a tyranny in the Romagna. This purchase thwarted the plans of Lorenzo, who wished to secure the same advantages for Florence. Smarting with the sense of disappointment, he forbade the Roman banker, Francesco Pazzi, to guarantee the purchase-money. By this act Lorenzo made two mortal foes—the Pope and Francesco Pazzi. Francesco was a thin, pale, atrabilious fanatic, all nerve and passion, with a monomaniac intensity of purpose, and a will inflamed and guided by imagination—a man formed by nature for conspiracy, such a man, in fact, as Shakespeare drew in Cassius. Maddened by Lorenzo's prohibition, he conceived the notion of overthrowing the Medici in Florence by a violent blow. Girolamo Riario entered into his views. So did Francesco Salviati, Archbishop of Pisa, who had private reasons for hostility. These men found no difficulty in

winning over Sixtus to their plot; nor is it possible to purge the Pope of participation in what followed. I need not describe by what means Francesco drew the other members of his family into the scheme, and how he secured the assistance of armed cutthroats. Suffice it to say that the chief conspirators, with the exception of the Count Girolamo, betook themselves to Florence, and there, after the failure of other attempts, decided to murder Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano in the cathedral on Sunday, the 26th of April, 1478. The moment when the priest at the high-altar finished the mass was fixed for the assassination. Everything was ready. The conspirators, by Judas kisses and embracements, had discovered that the young men wore no protective armor under their silken doublets. Pacing the aisle behind the choir, they feared no treason. And now the lives of both might easily have been secured, if at the last moment the courage of the hired assassins had not failed them. Murder, they said, was well enough; but they could not bring themselves to stab men before the newly consecrated body of Christ. In this extremity a priest was found who, "being accustomed to churches," had no scruples. He and another reprobate were told off to Lorenzo. Francesco de' Pazzi himself undertook Giuliano. The moment for attack arrived. Francesco plunged his dagger into the heart of Giuliano. Then, not satisfied with this death-blow, he struck again, and in his heat of passion wounded his own thigh. Lorenzo escaped with a flesh-wound from the poniard of the priest, and rushed into the sacristy, where his friend Poliziano shut and held the brazen door. The plot had failed; for Giuliano, of the two brothers, was the one whom the conspirators would the more willingly have spared. The whole church was in an uproar. The city rose in tumult. Rage and horror took possession of the people. They flew to the Palazzo Pubblico and to the houses of the Pazzi, hunted the conspirators from place to place, hung the archbishop by the neck

from the palace windows, and; as they found fresh victims for their fury, strung them one by one in a ghastly row at his side above the Square. About one hundred in all were killed. None who had joined in the plot escaped; for Lorenzo had long arms, and one man, who fled to Constantinople, was delivered over to his agents by the Sultan. Out of the whole Pazzi family only Guglielmo, the husband of Bianca de' Medici, was spared. When the tumult was over, Andrea del Castagno painted the portraits of the traitors head-downwards upon the walls of the Bargello Palace, in order that all men might know what fate awaited the foes of the Medici and of the State of Florence.* Meanwhile a bastard son of Giuliano's was received into the Medicean household, to perpetuate his lineage. This child, named Giulio, was destined to be famous in the annals of Italy and Florence under the title of Pope Clement VII.

XV.

As is usual when such plots miss their mark, the passions excited redounded to the profit of the injured party. The commonwealth felt that the blow struck at Lorenzo had been aimed at their majesty. Sixtus, on the other hand, could not contain his rage at the failure of so ably planned a *coup de main*. Ignoring that he had sanctioned the treason, that a priest had put his hand to the dagger, that the impious deed had been attempted in a church before the very Sacrament of Christ, whose vicar on earth he was, the Pope now excommunicated the Republic. The reason he alleged was, that the Florentines had dared to hang an archbishop.

Thus began a war to the death between Sixtus and Florence. The Pope inflamed the whole of Italy, and carried on a ruinous

* Giotto had painted the Duke of Athens, in like manner, on the same walls.

campaign in Tuscany. It seemed as though the republic might lose her subject cities, always ready to revolt when danger threatened the sovereign State. Lorenzo's position became critical. Sixtus made no secret of the hatred he bore him personally, declaring that he fought less with Florence than with the Medici. To support the odium of this long war and this heavy interdict alone, was more than he could do. His allies forsook him. Naples was enlisted on the Pope's side. Milan and the other States of Lombardy were occupied with their own affairs, and held aloof. In this extremity he saw that nothing but a bold step could save him. The league formed by Sixtus must be broken up at any risk, and, if possible, by his own ability. On the 6th of December, 1479, Lorenzo left Florence, unarmed and unattended, took ship at Leghorn, and proceeded to the court of the enemy, King Ferdinand, at Naples. Ferdinand was a cruel and treacherous sovereign, who had murdered his guest, Jacopo Piccinino, at a banquet given in his honor. But Ferdinand was the son of Alfonso, who, by address and eloquence, had gained a kingdom from his foe and jailer, Filippo Maria Visconti. Lorenzo calculated that he too, following Alfonso's policy, might prove to Ferdinand how little there was to gain from an alliance with Rome, how much Naples and Florence, firmly united together for offence and defence, might effect in Italy.

Only a student of those perilous times can appreciate the courage and the genius, the audacity combined with diplomatic penetration, displayed by Lorenzo at this crisis. He calmly walked into the lion's den, trusting he could tame the lion and teach it, and all in a few days. Nor did his expectation fail. Though Lorenzo was rather ugly than handsome, with a dark skin, heavy brows, powerful jaws, and nose sharp in the bridge and broad at the nostrils, without grace of carriage or melody of voice, he possessed what makes up for personal defects—the winning charm

of eloquence in conversation, a subtle wit, profound knowledge of men, and tact allied to sympathy, which placed him always at the centre of the situation. Ferdinand received him kindly. The Neapolitan nobles admired his courage and were fascinated by his social talents. On March 1, 1480, he left Naples again, having won over the king by his arguments. When he reached Florence he was able to declare that he brought home a treaty of peace and alliance signed by the most powerful foe of the republic. The success of this bold enterprise endeared Lorenzo more than ever to his countrymen. In the same year they concluded a treaty with Sixtus, who was forced against his will to lay down arms by the capture of Otranto and the extreme peril of Turkish invasion. After the year 1480 Lorenzo remained sole master in Florence, the arbiter and peacemaker of the rest of Italy.

XVI.

The conjuration of the Pazzi was only one in a long series of similar conspiracies. Italian despots gained their power by violence and wielded it with craft. Violence and craft were therefore used against them. When the study of the classics had penetrated the nation with antique ideas of heroism, tyrannicide became a virtue. Princes were murdered with frightful frequency. Thus Gian Maria Visconti was put to death at Milan in 1412; Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1484; the Chiarelli of Fabriano were massacred in 1435; the Baglioni of Perugia in 1500; Girolamo Gentile planned the assassination of Galeazzo Sforza at Genoa in 1476; Niccolo d' Este conspired against his uncle Ercole in 1476; Stefano Porcari attempted the life of Nicholas V. at Rome in 1453; Lodovico Sforza narrowly escaped a violent death in 1453. I might multiply these instances beyond satiety. As it is, I have selected but a few examples falling, all but two, within the second half of the fifteenth century. Nearly all these attempts upon the

lives of princes were made in church during the celebration of sacred offices. There was no superfluity of naughtiness, no wilful sacrilege, in this choice of an occasion. It only testified to the continual suspicion and guarded watchfulness maintained by tyrants. To strike at them except in church was almost impossible. Meanwhile the fate of the tyrannicides was uniform. Successful or not, they perished. Yet so grievous was the pressure of Italian despotism, so glorious was the ideal of Greek and Roman heroism, so passionate the temper of the people, that to kill a prince at any cost to self appeared the crown of manliness. This bloodshed exercised a delirious fascination: pure and base, personal and patriotic motives combined to add intensity of fixed and fiery purpose to the murderous impulse. Those then who, like the Medici, aspired to tyranny and sought to found a dynasty of princes, entered the arena against a host of unknown and unseen gladiators.

XVII.

On his death-bed, in 1492, Lorenzo lay between two men—Angelo Poliziano and Girolamo Savonarola. Poliziano incarnated the genial, radiant, godless spirit of fifteenth-century humanism. Savonarola represented the conscience of Italy, self-convicted, amid all her greatness, of crimes that called for punishment. It is said that when Lorenzo asked the monk for absolution, Savonarola bade him first restore freedom to Florence. Lorenzo turned his face to the wall and was silent. How indeed could he make this city in a moment free, after sixty years of slow and systematic corruption? Savonarola left him, and he died unshriven. This legend is doubtful, though it rests on excellent if somewhat partial authority. It has, at any rate, the value of a mythus, since it epitomizes the attitude assumed by the great preacher to the prince. Florence enslaved, the soul of Lorenzo cannot lay its

burden down, but must go with all its sins upon it to the throne of God.

The year 1492 was a memorable year for Italy. In this year Lorenzo's death removed the key-stone of the arch that had sustained the fabric of Italian federation. In this year Roderigo Borgia was elected pope. In this year Columbus discovered America; Vasco de Gama soon after opened a new way to the Indies, and thus the commerce of the world passed from Italy to other nations. In this year the conquest of Granada gave unity to the Spanish nation. In this year France, through the life-long craft of Louis XI., was for the first time united under a young hot-headed sovereign. On every side of the political horizon storms threatened. It was clear that a new chapter of European history had been opened. Then Savonarola raised his voice, and cried that the crimes of Italy, the abominations of the Church, would speedily be punished. Events led rapidly to the fulfilment of this prophecy. Lorenzo's successor, Piero de' Medici, was a vain, irresolute, and hasty princeling, fond of display, proud of his skill in fencing and football-playing, with too much of the Orsini blood in his hot veins, with too little of the Medicean craft in his weak head. The Italian despots felt they could not trust Piero, and this want of confidence was probably the first motive that impelled Lodovico Sforza to call Charles VIII. into Italy in 1494.

It will not be necessary to dwell upon this invasion of the French, except in so far as it affected Florence. Charles passed rapidly through Lombardy, engaged his army in the passes of the Apennines, and debouched upon the coast where the Magra divided Tuscany from Liguria. Here the fortresses of Sarzana and Pietra Santa, between the marble bulwark of Carrara and the Tuscan sea, stopped his further progress. The keys were held by the Florentines. To force these strong positions and to pass beyond them seemed impossible. It might have been impossible

if Piero de' Medici had possessed a firmer will. As it was, he rode off to the French camp, delivered up the forts to Charles, bound the king by no engagements, and returned not otherwise than proud of his folly to Florence. A terrible reception awaited him. The Florentines, in their fury, had risen and sacked the Medicean palace. It was as much as Piero, with his brothers, could do to escape beyond the hills to Venice. The despotism of the Medici, so carefully built up, so artfully sustained and strengthened, was overthrown in a single day.

XVIII.

Before considering what happened in Florence after the expulsion of the Medici, it will be well to pause a moment and review the state in which Lorenzo had left his family. Piero, his eldest son, recognized as chief of the republic after his father's death, was married to Alfonsina Orsini, and was in his twenty-second year. Giovanni, his second son, a youth of seventeen, had just been made cardinal. This honor, of vast importance for the Casa Medici in the future, he owed to his sister Maddalena's marriage to Franceschetto Cybo, son of Innocent VIII. The third of Lorenzo's sons, named Giuliano, was a boy of thirteen. Giulio, the bastard son of the elder Giuliano, was fourteen. These four princes formed the efficient strength of the Medici, the hope of the house; and for each of them, with the exception of Piero, who died in exile, and of whom no more notice need be taken, a brilliant destiny was still in store. In the year 1495, however, they now wandered, homeless and helpless, through the cities of Italy, each of which was shaken to its foundations by the French invasion.

XIX.

Florence, left without the Medici, deprived of Pisa and other subject cities by the passage of the French army, with no leader

but the monk Savonarola, now sought to reconstitute her liberties. During the domination of the Albizzi and the Medici the old order of the commonwealth had been completely broken up. The Arti had lost their primitive importance. The distinctions between the Grandi and the Popolani had practically passed away. In a democracy that has submitted to a lengthened course of tyranny, such extinction of its old life is inevitable. Yet the passion for liberty was still powerful; and the busy brains of the Florentines were stored with experience gained from their previous vicissitudes, from the study of antique history, and from the observation of existing constitutions in the towns of Italy. They now determined to reorganize the State upon the model of the Venetian republic. The Signory was to remain, with its old institution of Priors, Gonfalonier, and College, elected for brief periods. These magistrates were to take the initiative in debate, to propose measures and to consider plans of action. The real power of the State, for voting supplies and ratifying the measures of the Signory, was vested in a senate of one thousand members, called the Grand Council, from whom a smaller body of forty, acting as intermediates between the Council and the Signory, were elected. It is said that the plan of this constitution originated with Savonarola; nor is there any doubt that he used all his influence in the pulpit of the Duomo to render it acceptable to the people. Whoever may have been responsible for its formation, the new government was carried in 1495, and a large hall for the assembly of the Grand Council was opened in the Public Palace.

Savonarola, meanwhile, had become the ruling spirit of Florence. He gained his great power as a preacher: he used it like a monk. The motive principle of his action was the passion for reform. To bring the Church back to its pristine state of purity, without altering its doctrine or suggesting any new form of

creed; to purge Italy of ungodly customs; to overthrow the tyrants who encouraged evil living, and to place the power of the State in the hands of sober citizens—these were his objects. Though he set himself in bold opposition to the reigning Pope, he had no desire to destroy the spiritual supremacy of St. Peter's see. Though he burned with an enthusiastic zeal for liberty, and displayed rare genius for administration, he had no ambition to rule Florence like a dictator. Savonarola was neither a reformer in the Northern sense of the word, nor yet a political demagogue. His sole wish was to see purity of manners and freedom of self-government re-established. With this end in view he bade the Florentines elect Christ as their supreme chief; and they did so. For the same end he abstained from appearing in the State Councils, and left the Constitution to work by its own laws. His personal influence he reserved for the pulpit; and here he was omnipotent. The people believed in him as a prophet. They turned to him as the man who knew what he wanted—as the voice of liberty, the soul of the new régime, the genius who could breathe into the commonwealth a breath of fresh vitality. When, therefore, Savonarola preached a reform of manners, he was at once obeyed. Strict laws were passed enforcing sobriety, condemning trades of pleasure, reducing the gay customs of Florence to puritanical austerity.

Great stress has been laid upon this reaction of the monk-led populace against the vices of the past. Yet the historian is bound to pronounce that the reform effected by Savonarola was rather picturesque than vital. Like all violent revivals of pietism, it produced a no less violent reaction. The parties within the city who resented the interference of a preaching friar joined with the Pope in Rome, who hated a contumacious schismatic in Savonarola. Assailed by these two forces at the same moment, and driven upon perilous ground by his own febrile enthusiasm, Sa-

vonarola succumbed. He was imprisoned, tortured, and burned upon the public square in 1498.

What Savonarola really achieved for Florence was not a permanent reform of morality, but a resuscitation of the spirit of freedom. His followers, called in contempt *I Piagnoni*, or the Weepers, formed the pith of the commonwealth in future; and the memory of their martyr served as a common bond of sympathy to unite them in times of trial. It was a necessary consequence of the peculiar part he played, that the city was henceforth divided into factions representing mutually antagonistic principles. These factions were not created by Savonarola; but his extraordinary influence accentuated, as it were, the humors that lay dormant in the State. Families favorable to the Medici took the name of *Palleschi*. Men who chafed against puritanical reform, and who were eager for any government that should secure them their old license, were known as *Compagnacci*. Meanwhile the oligarchs, who disliked a democratic constitution, and thought it possible to found an aristocracy without the intervention of the Medici, came to be known as *Gli Ottimati*. Florence held within itself, from this epoch forward to the final extinction of liberty, four great parties: the *Piagnoni*, passionate for political freedom and austerity of life; the *Palleschi*, favorable to the Medicean cause, and regretful of Lorenzo's pleasant rule; the *Compagnacci*, intolerant of the reformed republic, neither hostile nor loyal to the Medici, but desirous of personal license; the *Ottimati*, astute and selfish, watching their own advantage, ever mindful to form a narrow government of privileged families, disinclined to the Medici, except when they thought the Medici might be employed as instruments in their intrigues.

XX.

During the short period of Savonarola's ascendancy, Florence was in form at least a theocracy, without any titular head but Christ; and as long as the enthusiasm inspired by the monk lasted, as long as his personal influence endured, the Constitution of the Grand Council worked well. After his death it was found that the machinery was too cumbrous. While adopting the Venetian form of government, the Florentines had omitted one essential element—the Doge. By referring measures of immediate necessity to the Grand Council, the republic lost precious time. Dangerous publicity, moreover, was incurred; and so large a body often came to no firm resolution. There was no permanent authority in the State; no security that what had been deliberated would be carried out with energy; no titular chief who could transact affairs with foreign potentates and their ambassadors. Accordingly, in 1502, it was decreed that the Gonfalonier should hold office for life—should be in fact a doge. To this important post of permanent president Piero Soderini was appointed; and in his hands were placed the chief affairs of the republic.

At this point Florence, after all her vicissitudes, had won her way to something really similar to the Venetian constitution. Yet the similarity existed more in form than in fact. The government of burghers in a Grand Council, with a Senate of forty, and a Gonfalonier for life, had not grown up gradually and absorbed into itself the vital forces of the commonwealth. It was a creation of inventive intelligence, not of national development, in Florence. It had against it the jealousy of the Ottimati, who felt themselves overshadowed by the Gonfalonier; the hatred of the Palleschi, who yearned for the Medici; the discontent of the working-classes, who thought the presence of a court in Florence would improve trade; last, but not least, the disaffection of the

Compagnacci, who felt they could not flourish to their heart's content in a free commonwealth. Moreover, though the name of liberty was on every lip, though the Florentines talked, wrote, and speculated more about constitutional independence than they had ever done, the true energy of free institutions had passed from the city. The corrupt government of Cosimo and Lorenzo bore its natural fruit now. Egotistic ambition and avarice supplanted patriotism and industry. It is necessary to comprehend these circumstances in order that the next revolution may be clearly understood.

XXI.

During the ten years which elapsed between 1502 and 1512, Piero Soderini administered Florence with an outward show of great prosperity. He regained Pisa, and maintained an honorable foreign policy in the midst of the wars stirred up by the League of Cambray. Meanwhile the young princes of the house of Medici had grown to manhood in exile. The Cardinal Giovanni was thirty-seven in 1512. His brother Giuliano was thirty-three. Both of these men were better fitted than their brother Piero to fight the battles of the family. Giovanni, in particular, had inherited no small portion of the Medicean craft. During the troubled reign of Julius II. he kept very quiet, cementing his connections with powerful men in Rome, but making no effort to regain his hold on Florence. Now the moment for striking a decisive blow had come. After the battle of Ravenna in 1512, the French were driven out of Italy, and the Sforzas returned to Milan; the Spanish troops, under the Viceroy Cardona, remained masters of the country. Following the camp of these Spaniards, Giovanni de' Medici entered Tuscany in August, and caused the restoration of the Medici to be announced in Florence. The people, assembled by Soderini, resolved to resist to the uttermost. No foreign army should force them to receive the masters whom

they had expelled. Yet their courage failed on August 29th, when news reached them of the capture and the sack of Prato. Prato is a sunny little city a few miles distant from the walls of Florence, famous for the beauty of its women, the richness of its gardens, and the grace of its buildings. Into this gem of cities the savage soldiery of Spain marched in the bright autumnal weather, and turned the paradise into a hell. It is even now impossible to read of what they did in Prato without shuddering.* Cruelty and lust, sordid greed for gold, and cold delight in bloodshed, could go no further. Giovanni de' Medici, by nature mild and voluptuous, averse to violence of all kinds, had to smile approval while the Spanish viceroy knocked thus with mailed hand for him at the door of Florence. The Florentines were paralyzed with terror. They deposed Soderini and received the Medici. Giovanni and Giuliano entered their devastated palace in the Via Larga, abolished the Grand Council, and dealt with the republic as they listed.

XXII.

There was no longer any medium in Florence possible between either tyranny or some such government as the Medici had now destroyed. The State was too rotten to recover even the modified despotism of Lorenzo's days. Each transformation had impaired some portion of its framework, broken down some of its traditions, and sowed new seeds of egotism in citizens who saw all things round them change but self-advantage. Therefore Giovanni and Giuliano felt themselves secure in flattering the popular vanity by an empty parade of the old institutions. They restored the Signory and the Gonfalonier, elected for intervals of two months by officers appointed for this purpose by the Medici. Florence had the show of a free government. But the Medici managed all things; and soldiers, commanded by their creature,

* See *Archivio Storico*.

Paolo Vettori, held the palace and the public square. The tyranny thus established was less secure, inasmuch as it openly rested upon violence, than Lorenzo's power had been; nor were there signs wanting that the burghers could ill brook their servitude. The conspiracy of Pietro Paolo Boscoli and Agostino Capponi proved that the Medicean brothers ran daily risk of life. Indeed, it is not likely that they would have succeeded in maintaining their authority—for they were poor and ill-supported by friends outside the city—except for one most lucky circumstance: that was the election of Giovanni de' Medici to the papacy in 1513.

The creation of Leo X. spread satisfaction throughout Italy. Politicians trusted that he would display some portion of his father's ability, and restore peace to the nation. Men of arts and letters expected everything from a Medicean pope, who had already acquired the reputation of polite culture and open-handed generosity. They at any rate were not deceived. Leo's first words on taking his place in the Vatican were addressed to his brother Giuliano: "Let us enjoy the papacy, now that God has given it to us;" and his notion of enjoyment was to surround himself with court-poets, jesters, and musicians, to adorn his Roman palaces with frescos, to collect statues and inscriptions, to listen to Latin speeches, and to pass judgment upon scholarly compositions. Any one and every one who gave him sensual or intellectual pleasure, found his purse always open. He lived in the utmost magnificence, and made Rome the Paris of the Renaissance for brilliance, immorality, and self-indulgent ease. The politicians had less reason to be satisfied. Instead of uniting the Italians and keeping the great powers of Europe in check, Leo carried on a series of disastrous petty wars, chiefly with the purpose of establishing the Medici as princes. He squandered the revenues of the Church, and left enormous debts behind him—an

exchequer ruined and a foreign policy so confused that peace for Italy could only be obtained by servitude.

Florence shared in the general rejoicing which greeted Leo's accession to the papacy. He was the first Florentine citizen who had received the tiara, and the popular vanity was flattered by this honor to the republic. Political theorists, meanwhile, began to speculate what greatness Florence, in combination with Rome, might rise to. The Pope was young; he ruled a large territory, reduced to order by his warlike predecessors. It seemed as though the republic, swayed by him, might make herself the first city in Italy, and restore the glories of her Guelf ascendancy upon the platform of Renaissance state-craft. There was now no overt opposition to the Medici in Florence. How to govern the city from Rome, and how to advance the fortunes of his brother Giuliano and his nephew Lorenzo (Piero's son, a young man of twenty-one) occupied the Pope's most serious attention. For Lorenzo Leo obtained the Duchy of Urbino and the hand of a French princess. Giuliano was named Gonfalonier of the Church. He also received the French title of Duke of Nemours and the hand of Filiberta, Princess of Savoy. Leo entertained a further project of acquiring the crown of Southern Italy for his brother, and thus of uniting Rome, Florence, and Naples under the headship of his house. Nor were the Medicean interests neglected in the Church. Giulio, the Pope's bastard cousin, was made cardinal. He remained in Rome, acting as vice-chancellor and doing the hard work of the papal government for the pleasure-loving pontiff.

To Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, the titular head of the family, was committed the government of Florence. During their exile, wandering from court to court in Italy, the Medici had forgotten what it was to be burghers, and had acquired the manners of princes. Leo alone retained enough of caution to warn his nephew that the Florentines must still be treated as free people. He

confirmed the constitution of the Signory and the Privy Council of seventy established by his father, bidding Lorenzo, while he ruled this sham republic, to avoid the outer signs of tyranny. The young duke at first behaved with moderation, but he could not cast aside his habits of a great lord. Florence now for the first time saw a regular court established in her midst, with a prince who, though he bore a foreign title, was in fact her master. The joyous days of Lorenzo the Magnificent returned. Masquerades and triumphs filled the public squares. Two clubs of pleasure, called the Diamond and the Branch—badges adopted by the Medici to signify their firmness in disaster and their power of self-recovery—were formed to lead the revels. The best sculptors and painters devoted their genius to the invention of costumes and cars. The city affected to believe that the age of gold had come again.

XXIII.

Fortune had been very favorable to the Medici. They had returned as princes to Florence. Giovanni was Pope. Giuliano was Gonfalonier of the Church. Giulio was Cardinal and Archbishop of Florence. Lorenzo ruled the city like a sovereign. But this prosperity was no less brief than it was brilliant. A few years sufficed to sweep off all the chiefs of the great house. Giuliano died in 1516, leaving only a bastard son, Ippolito. Lorenzo died in 1519, leaving a bastard son, Alessandro, and a daughter, six days old, who lived to be the Queen of France. Leo died in 1521. There remained now no legitimate male descendants from the stock of Cosimo. The honors and pretensions of the Medici devolved upon three bastards—on the Cardinal Giulio, and the two boys Alessandro and Ippolito. Of these, Alessandro was a mulatto, his mother having been a Moorish slave in the Palace of Urbino; and whether his father was Giulio or Giuliano or a base groom was not known for certain. To such extremities were the

Medici reduced. In order to keep their house alive, they were obliged to adopt this foundling. It is true that the younger branch of the family, descended from Lorenzo, the brother of Cosimo, still flourished. At this epoch it was represented by Giovanni, the great general known as the Invincible, whose bust so strikingly resembles that of Napoleon. But between this line of the Medici and the elder branch there had never been true cordiality. The cardinal mistrusted Giovanni. It may, moreover, be added, that Giovanni was himself doomed to death in the year 1526.

Giulio de' Medici was left in 1521 to administer the State of Florence single-handed. He was archbishop, and he resided in the city, holding it with a grasp of an absolute ruler. Yet he felt his position insecure. The republic had no longer any forms of self-government; nor was there a magistracy to whom the despot could delegate his power in his absence. Giulio's ambition was fixed upon the papal crown. The bastards he was rearing were but children. Florence had, therefore, to be furnished with some political machinery that should work of itself. The cardinal did not wish to give freedom to the city, but clockwork. He was in the perilous situation of having to rule a commonwealth without life, without elasticity, without capacity of self-movement, yet full of such material as, left alone, might ferment, and breed a revolution. In this perplexity, he had recourse to advisers. The most experienced politicians, philosophical theorists, practical diplomatists, and students of antique history were requested to furnish him with plans for a new constitution, just as you ask an architect to give you the plan of a new house. This was the field-day of the doctrinaires. Now was seen how much political sagacity the Florentines had gained while they were losing liberty. We possess these several drafts of constitutions. Some recommend tyranny; some incline to aristocracy, or what Italians called

Governo Stretto ; some to democracy, or *Governo Largo* ; some to an eclectic compound of the other forms, or *Governo Misto*. More consummate masterpieces of constructive ingenuity can hardly be imagined. What is omitted in all is just what no doctrinaire, no nostrum, can communicate—the breath of life, the principle of organic growth. Things had come, indeed, to a melancholy pass for Florence when her tyrant, in order to confirm his hold upon her, had to devise these springs and irons to support her tottering limbs.

XXIV.

While the archbishop and the doctors were debating, a plot was hatching in the Rucellai Gardens. It was here that the Florentine Academy now held their meetings. For this society Machiavelli wrote his *Treatise on the Art of War* and his *Discourses upon Livy*. The former was an exposition of Machiavelli's scheme for creating a national militia, as the only safeguard for Italy, exposed at this period to the invasions of great foreign armies. The latter is one of the three or four masterpieces produced by the Florentine school of critical historians. Stimulated by the daring speculations of Machiavelli, and fired to enthusiasm by their study of antiquity, the younger academicians formed a conspiracy for murdering Giulio de' Medici, and restoring the republic on a Roman model. An intercepted letter betrayed their plans. Two of the conspirators were taken and beheaded. Others escaped. But the discovery of this conjuration put a stop to Giulio's scheme of reforming the State. Henceforth he ruled Florence like a despot, mild in manners, cautious in the exercise of arbitrary power, but firm in his autocracy. The Condottiere Alessandro Vitelli, with a company of soldiers, was taken into service for the protection of his person and the intimidation of the citizens.

In 1523, the Pope, Adrian VI., expired after a short papacy,

from which he gained no honor and Italy no profit. Giulio hurried to Rome, and, by the clever use of his large influence, caused himself to be elected with the title of Clement VII. In Florence he left Silvio Passerini, Cardinal of Cortona, as his vicegerent and the guardian of the two boys Alessandro and Ippolito. The discipline of many years had accustomed the Florentines to a government of priests. Still the burghers, mindful of their ancient liberties, were galled by the yoke of a Cortonese, sprung up from one of their subject cities; nor could they bear the bastards who were being reared to rule them. Foreigners threw it in their teeth that Florence, the city glorious of art and freedom, was become a stable for mules—*stalla da muli*, in the expressive language of popular sarcasm. Bastardy, it may be said in passing, carried with it small dishonor among the Italians. The Estensi were all illegitimate; the Aragonese house in Naples sprang from Alfonso's natural son; and children of Popes ranked among the princes. Yet the uncertainty of Alessandro's birth and the base condition of his mother made the prospect of this tyrant peculiarly odious; while the primacy of a foreign cardinal in the midst of citizens whose spirit was still unbroken embittered the cup of humiliation. The Casa Medici held its authority by a slender thread, and depended more upon the disunion of the burghers than on any power of its own. It could always reckon on the favor of the lower populace, who gained profit and amusement from the presence of a court. The Ottimati, again, hoped more from a weak despotism than from a commonwealth, where their privileges would have been merged in the mass of the Grand Council. Thus the sympathies of the plebeians and the selfishness of the rich patri-cians prevented the republic from asserting itself. On this meagre basis of personal cupidity the Medici sustained themselves. What made the situation still more delicate, and at the same time protracted the feeble rule of Clement, was that neither the Floren-

tines nor the Medici had any army. Face to face with a potentate so considerable as the Pope, a free State could not be established without military force. On the other hand, the Medici, supported by a mere handful of mercenaries, had no power to resist a popular rising if any external event should inspire the middle classes with a hope of liberty.

XXV.

Clement assumed the tiara at a moment of great difficulty. Leo had ruined the finance of Rome. France and Spain were still contending for the possession of Italy. While acting as Vice-Chancellor, Giulio de' Medici had seemed to hold the reins with a firm grasp, and men expected that he would prove a powerful Pope; but in those days he had Leo to help him; and Leo, though indolent, was an abler man than his cousin. He planned, and Giulio executed. Obligated to act now for himself, Clement revealed the weakness of his nature. That weakness was irresolution, craft without wisdom, diplomacy without knowledge of men. He raised the storm, and showed himself incapable of guiding it. This is not the place to tell by what a series of crooked schemes and cross purposes he brought upon himself the ruin of the Church and Rome, to relate his disagreement with the emperor, or to describe again the sack of the Eternal City by the rabble of the Constable de Bourbon's army. That wreck of Rome in 1527 was the closing scene of the Italian Renaissance—the last of the apocalyptic tragedies foretold by Savonarola—the death of the old age.

When the Florentines knew what was happening in Rome, they rose and forced the Cardinal Passerini to depart with the Medicean bastards from the city. The youth demanded arms for the defence of the town, and they received them. The whole male population was enrolled in a militia. The Grand Council was reformed, and

the republic was restored upon the basis of 1495. Niccolo Capponi was elected Gonfalonier. The name of Christ was again registered as chief of the commonwealth—to such an extent did the memory of Savonarola still sway the popular imagination. The new State hastened to form an alliance with France, and Malatesta Baglioni was chosen as military commander-in-chief. Meanwhile the city armed itself for siege—Michel Angelo Buonarroti and Francesco da San Gallo undertaking the construction of new forts and ramparts. These measures were adopted with sudden decision, because it was soon known that Clement had made peace with the emperor, and that the army which had sacked Rome was going to be marched on Florence.

XXVI.

In the month of August, 1529, the Prince of Orange assembled his forces at Terni, and thence advanced by easy stages into Tuscany. As he approached, the Florentines laid waste their suburbs, and threw down their wreath of towers, in order that the enemy might have no harborage or points of vantage for attack. Their troops were concentrated within the city, where a new Gonfalonier, Francesco Carducci, furiously opposed to the Medici, and attached to the Piagnoni party, now ruled. On September 4 the Prince of Orange appeared before the walls, and opened the memorable siege. It lasted eight months, at the end of which time, betrayed by their generals, divided among themselves, and worn out with delays, the Florentines capitulated. Florence was paid as compensation for the insult offered to the pontiff in the sack of Rome.

The long yoke of the Medici had undermined the character of the Florentines. This, their last glorious struggle for liberty, was but a flash in the pan—a final flare-up of the dying lamp. The city was not satisfied with slavery; but it had no capacity for

united action. The Ottimati were egotistic and jealous of the people. The Palleschi desired to restore the Medici at any price—some of them frankly wishing for a principality, others trusting that the old quasi-republican government might still be reinstated. The Red Republicans, styled Libertini and Arrabbiati, clung together in blind hatred of the Medicean party; but they had no further policy to guide them. The Piagnoni, or Frateschi, stuck to the memory of Savonarola, and believed that angels would descend to guard the battlements when human help had failed. These enthusiasts still formed the true nerve of the nation—the class that might have saved the State, if salvation had been possible. Even as it was, the energy of their fanaticism prolonged the siege until resistance seemed no longer physically possible. The hero developed by the crisis was Francesco Ferrucci, a plebeian who had passed his youth in manual labor, and who now displayed rare military genius. He fell fighting outside the walls of Florence. Had he commanded the troops from the beginning, and remained inside the city, it is just possible that the fate of the war might have been less disastrous. As it was, Malatesta Baglioni, the commander-in-chief, turned out an arrant scoundrel. He held secret correspondence with Clement and the Prince of Orange. It was he who finally sold Florence to her foes, “putting on his head,” as the Doge of Venice said before the Senate, “the cap of the biggest traitor upon record.”

XXVII.

What remains of Florentine history may be briefly told. Clement, now the undisputed arbiter of power and honor in the city, chose Alessandro de' Medici to be prince. Alessandro was created Duke of Cività di Penna, and married to a natural daughter of Charles V. Ippolito was made a cardinal. Ippolito would have preferred a secular to a priestly kingdom; nor did he conceal his

jealousy for his cousin. Therefore Alessandro had him poisoned. Alessandro in his turn was murdered by his kinsman Lorenzino de' Medici. Lorenzino paid the usual penalty of tyrannicide some years later. When Alessandro was killed, in 1539, Clement had himself been dead five years. Thus the whole posterity of Cosimo de' Medici, with the exception of Catherine, Queen of France, was utterly extinguished. But the Medici had struck root so firmly in the State, and had so remodelled it upon the type of tyranny, that the Florentines were no longer able to do without them. The chiefs of the Ottimati selected Cosimo, the representative of Giovanni the Invincible, for their prince, and thus the line of the elder Lorenzo came at last to power. This Cosimo was a boy of eighteen, fond of field sports, and unused to party intrigues. When Francesco Guicciardini offered him a privy purse of one hundred and twenty thousand ducats annually, together with the presidency of Florence, this wily politician hoped that he would rule the State through Cosimo, and realize at last that dream of the Ottimati, a *Governo Stretto* or *di Pochi*. He was notably mistaken in his calculations. The first days of Cosimo's administration showed that he possessed the craft of his family and the vigor of his immediate progenitors, and that he meant to be sole master in Florence. He it was who obtained the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany from the Pope—a title confirmed by the emperor, fortified by Austrian alliances, and transmitted through his heirs to the present century.

XXVIII.

In this sketch of Florentine history I have purposely omitted all details that did not bear upon the constitutional history of the republic, or on the growth of the Medici as despots; because I wanted to present a picture of the process whereby that family contrived to fasten itself upon the freest and most cultivated

State in Italy. This success the Medici owed mainly to their own obstinacy, and to the weakness of republican institutions in Florence. Their power was founded upon wealth in the first instance, and upon the ingenuity with which they turned the favor of the proletariat to use. It was confirmed by the mistakes and failures of their enemies, by Rinaldo degli Albizzi's attack on Cosimo, by the conspiracy of Neroni and Pitti against Piero, and by Francesco de' Pazzi's attempt to assassinate Lorenzo. It was still further strengthened by the Medicean sympathy for arts and letters—a sympathy which placed both Cosimo and Lorenzo at the head of the Renaissance movement, and made them worthy to represent Florence, the city of genius, in the fifteenth century. While thus founding and cementing their dynastic influence upon the basis of a wide-spread popularity, the Medici employed persistent cunning in the enfeeblement of the republic. It was their policy not to plant themselves by force or acts of overt tyranny, but to corrupt ambitious citizens, to secure the patronage of public officers, and to render the spontaneous working of the State machinery impossible. By pursuing this policy over a long series of years they made the revival of liberty in 1494, and again in 1527, ineffectual. While exiled from Florence, they never lost the hope of returning as masters, so long as the passions they had excited, and they alone could gratify, remained in full activity. These passions were avarice and egotism, the greed of the grasping Ottimati, the jealousy of the nobles, the self-indulgence of the proletariat. Yet it is probable they might have failed to recover Florence, on one or other of these two occasions, but for the accident which placed Giovanni de' Medici on the papal chair, and enabled him to put Giulio in the way of the same dignity. From the accession of Leo, in 1513, to the year 1527 the Medici ruled Florence from Rome, and brought the power of the Church into the service of their despotism.

After that date they were still further aided by the imperial policy of Charles V., who chose to govern Italy through subject princes, bound to himself by domestic alliances and powerful interests. One of these was Cosimò, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany.

THE DEBT OF ENGLISH TO ITALIAN LITERATURE.

To an Englishman one of the chief interests of the study of Italian literature is derived from the fact that between England and Italy an almost uninterrupted current of intellectual intercourse has been maintained throughout the last five centuries. The English have never, indeed, at any time been slavish imitators of the Italians; but Italy has formed the dreamland of the English fancy, inspiring poets with their most delightful thoughts, supplying them with subjects, and implanting in their minds that sentiment of Southern beauty which, engrafted on our more passionately imaginative Northern nature, has borne rich fruit in the works of Chaucer, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton, and the poets of this century.

It is not strange that Italy should thus in matters of culture have been the guide and mistress of England. Italy, of all the European nations, was the first to produce high art and literature in the dawn of modern civilization. Italy was the first to display refinement in domestic life, polish of manners, civilities of intercourse. In Italy the commerce of courts first developed a society of men and women educated by the same traditions of humanistic culture. In Italy the principles of government were first discussed and reduced to theory. In Italy the zeal for the classics took its origin; and scholarship, to which we owe our mental training, was at first the possession of none almost but Italians. It therefore followed that during the age of the Renaissance any man of taste or genius who desired to share the newly discovered privileges of learning had to seek Italy. Every one who wished

to be initiated into the secrets of science or philosophy had to converse with Italians in person or through books. Every one who was eager to polish his native language, and to render it the proper vehicle of poetic thought, had to consult the masterpieces of Italian literature. To Italians the courtier, the diplomatist, the artist, the student of state-craft and of military tactics, the political theorist, the merchant, the man of laws, the man of arms, and the churchman turned for precedents and precepts. The nations of the North, still torpid and somnolent in their semi-barbarism, needed the magnetic touch of Italy before they could awake to intellectual life. Nor was this all. Long before the thirst for culture possessed the English mind, Italy had appropriated and assimilated all that Latin literature contained of strong or splendid to arouse the thought and fancy of the modern world; Greek, too, was rapidly becoming the possession of the scholars of Florence and Rome; so that English men of letters found the spirit of the ancients infused into a modern literature; models of correct and elegant composition existed for them in a language easy, harmonious, and not dissimilar in usage to their own.

The importance of this service, rendered by Italians to the rest of Europe, cannot be exaggerated. By exploring, digesting, and reproducing the classics, Italy made the labor of scholarship comparatively light for the Northern nations, and extended to us the privilege of culture without the peril of losing originality in the enthusiasm for erudition. Our great poets could handle lightly, and yet profitably, those masterpieces of Greece and Rome, beneath the weight of which, when first discovered, the genius of the Italians had wavered. To the originality of Shakespeare an accession of wealth without weakness was brought by the perusal of Italian works, in which the spirit of the antique was seen as in a modern mirror. Then, in addition to this benefit of instruction, Italy gave to England a gift of pure beauty, the influence of

which, in refining our national taste, harmonizing the roughness of our manners and our language, and stimulating our imagination, has been incalculable. It was a not unfrequent custom for young men of ability to study at the Italian universities, or at least to undertake a journey to the principal Italian cities. From their sojourn in that land of loveliness and intellectual life they returned with their Northern brains most powerfully stimulated. To produce, by masterpieces of the imagination, some work of style that should remain as a memento of that glorious country, and should vie on English soil with the art of Italy, was their generous ambition. Consequently the substance of the stories versified by our poets, the forms of our metres, and the cadences of our prose periods reveal a close attention to Italian originals.

This debt of England to Italy in the matter of our literature began with Chaucer. Truly original and national as was the framework of the *Canterbury Tales*, we can hardly doubt but that Chaucer was determined in the form adopted for his poem by the example of Boccaccio. The subject-matter, also, of many of his tales was taken from Boccaccio's prose or verse. For example, the story of Patient Grizzel is founded upon one of the legends of the *Decameron*, while the Knight's Tale is almost translated from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio, and Troilus and Creseide is derived from the *Filostrato* of the same author. The Franklin's Tale and the Reeve's Tale are also based either on stories of Boccaccio or else on French *Fabliaux*, to which Chaucer, as well as Boccaccio, had access. I do not wish to lay too much stress upon Chaucer's direct obligations to Boccaccio, because it is incontestable that the French *Fabliaux*, which supplied them both with subjects, were the common property of the mediæval nations. But his indirect debt in all that concerns elegant handling of material, and in the fusion of the romantic with the classic spirit, which forms the chief charm of such tales

as the Palamon and Arcite, can hardly be exaggerated. Lastly, the seven-lined stanza, called *rime royal*, which Chaucer used with so much effect in narrative poetry, was probably borrowed from the earlier Florentine *Ballata*, the last line rhyming with its predecessor being substituted for the recurrent refrain. Indeed, the stanza itself, as used by our earliest poets, may be found in Guido Cavalcanti's *Ballatetta*, beginning, "Posso degli occhi miei."

Between Chaucer and Surrey the Muse of England fell asleep; but when in the latter half of the reign of Henry VIII. she awoke again, it was as a conscious pupil of the Italian that she attempted new strains and essayed fresh metres. "In the latter end of Henry VIII.'s reign," says Puttenham, "sprang up a new company of courtly makers, of whom Sir T. Wyatt the elder, and Henry, Earl of Surrey, were the two chieftains, who, having travelled into Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poesy, as novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesy, from that it had been before, and for that cause may justly be said the first reformers of our English metre and style." The chief point in which Surrey imitated his "master, Francis Petrarcha," was in the use of the sonnet. He introduced this elaborate form of poetry into our literature; and how it has thriven with us, the masterpieces of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, Rossetti, attest. As practised by Dante and Petrarch, the sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines, divided into two quatrains and two triplets, so arranged that the two quatrains repeat one pair of rhymes, while the two triplets repeat another pair. Thus an Italian sonnet of the strictest form is composed upon four rhymes, interlaced with great art. But much divergence from this rigid scheme of rhyming was admitted even by Petrarch, who not unfrequently divided

the six final lines of the sonnet into three couplets, interwoven in such a way that the two last lines never rhymed.*

It has been necessary to say thus much about the structure of the Italian sonnet, in order to make clear the task which lay before Surrey and Wyatt, when they sought to transplant it into English. Surrey did not adhere to the strict fashion of Petrarch: his sonnets consist either of three regular quatrains concluded with a couplet, or else of twelve lines rhyming alternately and concluded with a couplet. Wyatt attempted to follow the order and interlacement of the Italian rhymes more closely, but he too concluded his sonnet with a couplet. This introduction of the final couplet was a violation of the Italian rule, which may be fairly considered as prejudicial to the harmony of the whole structure, and which has insensibly caused the English sonnet to terminate in an epigram. The famous sonnet of Surrey on his love, Geraldine, is an excellent example of the metrical structure as adapted to the supposed necessities of English rhyming, and as afterwards adhered to by Shakespeare in his long series of love-poems. Surrey, while adopting the form of the sonnet, kept quite clear of the Petrarchist's mannerism. His language is simple and direct: there is no subtilizing upon far-fetched conceits, no wire-drawing of exquisite sentimentalism, although he celebrates in this, as in his other sonnets, a lady for whom he appears to have entertained no more than a Platonic or imaginary passion. Surrey was a great experimentalist in metre. Besides the sonnet, he introduced into England blank verse, which he borrowed from the Italian *versi sciolti*, fixing that decasyllable iambic rhythm for English versification in which our greatest poetical triumphs have been achieved.†

* The order of rhymes runs thus: *a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, c, d, c, d, c, d*; or in the tercets, *c, d, c, c, d, e*, or *c, d, e, d, c, e*, and so forth.

† See Appendix on Blank Verse, vol. ii. p. 325.

Before quitting the subject of the sonnet it would, however, be well to mention the changes which were wrought in its structure by early poets desirous of emulating the Italians. Shakespeare, as already hinted, adhered to the simple form introduced by Surrey: his stanzas invariably consist of three separate quatrains followed by a couplet. But Sir Philip Sidney, whose familiarity with Italian literature was intimate, and who had resided long in Italy, perceived that without a greater complexity and interweaving of rhymes the beauty of the poem was considerably impaired. He therefore combined the rhymes of the two quatrains, as the Italians had done, leaving himself free to follow the Italian fashion in the conclusion, or else to wind up after English usage with a couplet. Spenser and Drummond follow the rule of Sidney; Drayton and Daniel, that of Surrey and Shakespeare. It was not until Milton that an English poet preserved the form of the Italian sonnet in its strictness; but, after Milton, the greatest sonnet-writers—Wordsworth, Keats, and Rossetti—have aimed at producing stanzas as regular as those of Petrarch.

The great age of our literature—the age of Elizabeth—was essentially one of Italian influence. In Italy the Renaissance had reached its height; England, feeling the new life which had been infused into arts and letters, turned instinctively to Italy, and adopted her canons of taste. *Euphues* has a distinct connection with the Italian discourses of polite culture. Sidney's *Arcadia* is a copy of what Boccaccio had attempted in his classical romances, and Sanazzaro in his pastorals.* Spenser approached

* It has extraordinary interest for the student of our literary development, inasmuch as it is full of experiments in metres, which have never thriven on English soil. Not to mention the attempt to write in asclepiads and other classical rhythms, we might point to Sidney's *terza rima* poems with *sdrucciolo* or treble rhymes. This peculiar and painful form he borrowed from Ariosto and Sanazzaro; but even in Italian it cannot be handled without sacrifice of variety, without impeding the metrical movement and marring the sense.

the subject of the *Faerie Queene* with his head full of Ariosto and the romantic poets of Italy. His sonnets are Italian; his odes embody the Platonic philosophy of the Italians.* The extent of Spenser's deference to the Italians in matters of poetic art may be gathered from this passage in the dedication to Sir Walter Raleigh of the *Faerie Queene*:

"I have followed all the antique poets historical: first Homer, who in the persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governor and a virtuous man, the one in his *Ilias*, the other in his *Odysseis*; then Virgil, whose like intention was to do in the person of Æneas; after him Ariosto comprised them both in his *Orlando*; and lately Tasso dissevered them again, and formed both parts in two persons, namely, that part which they in Philosophy call *Ethice*, or virtues of a private man, colored in his *Rinaldo*, the other named *Politice* in his *Goffredo*."

From this it is clear that, to the mind of Spenser, both Ariosto and Tasso were authorities of hardly less gravity than Homer and Virgil. Raleigh, in the splendid sonnet with which he responds to this dedication, enhances the fame of Spenser by affecting to believe that the great Italian, Petrarch, will be jealous of him in the grave. To such an extent were the thoughts of the English poets occupied with their Italian masters in the art of song.

It was at this time, again, that English literature was enriched by translations of Ariosto and Tasso—the one from the pen of Sir John Harrington, the other from that of Fairfax. Both were produced in the metre of the original—the octave stanza, which, however, did not at that period take root in England. At the same period the works of many of the Italian novelists, especially Bandello and Cinthio and Boiardo, were translated into English; Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* being a treasure-house of

* The stately structure of the *Prothalamion* and *Epythalamion* is a reminiscence of the Italian canzone. His *Elegues*, with their allegories, repeat the manner of Petrarch's minor Latin poems.

Italian works of fiction. Thomas Hoby translated Castiglione's *Courtier* in 1561. As a proof of the extent to which Italian books were read in England at the end of the sixteenth century, we may take a stray sentence from a letter of Harvey, in which he disparages the works of Robert Greene: "Even Guicciardine's silver histories and Ariosto's golden cantos grow out of request; and the Countess of Pembroke's *Arcadia* is not green enough for queasy stomachs; but they must have seen Greene's *Arcadia*, and I believe most eagerly longed for Greene's *Faerie Queene*."

Still more may be gathered on the same topic from the indignant protest uttered by Roger Ascham in his *Schoolmaster* (pp. 78-91, date 1570) against the prevalence of Italian customs, the habit of Italian travel, and the reading of Italian books translated into English. Selections of Italian stories rendered into English were extremely popular; and Greene's tales, which had such vogue that Nash says of them, "glad was that printer that might be so blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit," were all modelled on the Italian. The education of a young man of good family was not thought complete unless he had spent some time in Italy, studied its literature, admired its arts, and caught at least some tincture of its manners. Our rude ancestors brought back with them from these journeys many Southern vices, together with the culture they had gone to seek. The contrast between the plain dealing of the North and the refined Machiavellism of the South, between Protestant earnestness in religion and Popish scepticism, between the homely virtues of England and the courtly libertinism of Venice or Florence, blunted the moral sense, while it stimulated the intellectual activity of the English travellers, and too often communicated a fatal shock to their principles. *Inglese Italianato è un diavolo incarnato* passed into a proverb; we find it on the lips of Parker, of Howell, of

Sidney, of Greene, and of Ascham; while Italy itself was styled by severe moralists the court of Circe. In James Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell* we find this pregnant sentence: "And being now in Italy, that great limbique of working braines, he must be very circumspect in his carriage, for she is able to turne a Saint into a devill, and deprave the best natures, if one will abandon himselfe, and become a prey to dissolut courses and wantonnesse." Italy, in truth, had already become corrupt, and the fruit of her contact with the nations of the North was seen in the lives of such scholars as Robert Greene, who confessed that he returned from his travels instructed "in all the villanies under the sun." Many of the scandals of the court of James might be ascribed to this aping of Southern manners.

Yet, together with the evil of depraved morality, the advantage of improved culture was imported from Italy into England; and the constitution of the English genius was young and healthy enough to purge off the mischief, while it assimilated what was beneficial. This is very manifest in the history of our drama, which, taking it altogether, is at the same time the purest and the most varied that exists in literature; while it may be affirmed without exaggeration that one of the main impulses to free dramatic composition in England was communicated by the attraction everything Italian possessed for the English fancy. It was in the drama that the English displayed the richness and the splendor of the Renaissance, which had blazed so gorgeously and at times so balefully below the Alps. The Italy of the Renaissance fascinated our dramatists with a strange wild glamour—the contrast of external pageant and internal tragedy, the alternations of radiance and gloom, the terrible examples of bloodshed, treason, and heroism emergent from ghastly crimes. Our drama began with a translation of Ariosto's *Suppositi* and ended with Davenant's *Just Italian*. In the very dawn of tragic composition Greene

versified a portion of the *Orlando Furioso*, and Marlowe devoted one of his most brilliant studies to the villainies of a Maltese Jew. Of Shakespeare's plays, five are incontestably Italian; several of the rest are furnished with Italian names to suit the popular taste. Ben Jonson laid the scene of his most subtle comedy of manners, *Volpone*, in Venice, and sketched the first cast of *Every Man in his Humor* for Italian characters. Tourneur, Ford, and Webster were so dazzled by the tragic lustre of the wickedness of Italy that their finest dramas, without exception, are minute and carefully studied psychological analyses of great Italian tales of crime. The same, in a less degree, is true of Middleton and Dekker. Massinger makes a story of the Sforza family the subject of one of his best plays. Beaumont and Fletcher draw the subjects of comedies and tragedies alike from the Italian novelists. Fletcher, in his *Faithful Shepherdess*, transfers the pastoral style of Tasso and Guarini to the North. So close is the connection between our tragedy and Italian novels that Marston and Ford think fit to introduce passages of Italian dialogue into the plays of *Giovanni and Annabella* and *Antonio and Mellida*. But the best proof of the extent to which Italian life and literature had influenced our dramatists may be easily obtained by taking down Halliwell's *Dictionary of Old Plays* and noticing that about every third drama has an Italian title. Meanwhile the poems composed by the chief dramatists—Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, Marston's *Pygmalion*, and Beaumont's *Hermaphrodite*—are all of them conceived in the Italian style by men who had either studied Southern literature or had submitted to its powerful æsthetic influences. The Masques, moreover, of Jonson, of Lyly, of Fletcher, and of Chapman, are exact reproductions upon the English court theatres of such festival pageants as were presented to the Medici at Florence or to the Este family at Fer-

rara.* Throughout our drama the influence of Italy, direct or indirect, either as supplying our playwrights with subjects or as stimulating their imagination, may thus be traced. Yet the Elizabethan drama is in the highest sense original. As a work of art pregnant with deepest wisdom and splendidly illustrative of the age which gave it birth, it far transcends anything that Italy produced in the same department. Our poets have a more masculine judgment, more fiery fancy, nobler sentiment, than the Italians of any age but that of Dante. What Italy gave was the impulse towards creation, not patterns to be imitated—the excitement of the imagination by a spectacle of so much grandeur, not rules and precepts for production—the keen sense of tragic beauty, not any tradition of accomplished art.

The Elizabethan period of our literature was in fact the period during which we derived most from the Italian nation. The study of the Italian language went hand in hand with the study of Greek and Latin, so that the three together contributed to form the English taste. Between us and the ancient world stood the genius of Italy as an interpreter. Nor was this connection broken until far on into the reign of Charles II. What Milton owed to Italy is clear not only from his Italian sonnets, but also from the frequent mention of Dante and Petrarch in his prose works, from his allusions to Boiardo and Ariosto in the *Paradise Lost*, and from the hints which he probably derived from Pulci, Tasso, and Andreini. It would, indeed, be easy throughout his works to trace a continuous vein of Italian influence in detail. But, more than this, Milton's poetical taste in general seems to have been formed and ripened by familiarity with the harmonies of the Italian language. In his Tractate on Education addressed

* Marlowe makes Gaveston talk of "Italian masques." At the same time, in the prologue to *Tamburlaine*, he shows that he was conscious of the new and nobler direction followed by the drama in England.

to Mr. Hartlib, he recommends that boys should be instructed in the Italian pronunciation of vowel sounds, in order to give sonorousness and dignity to elocution. This slight indication supplies us with a key to the method of melodious structure employed by Milton in his blank verse. Those who have carefully studied the harmonies of the *Paradise Lost* know how all-important are the assonances of the vowel sounds of *o* and *a* in its most musical passages. It is just this attention to the liquid and sonorous recurrences of open vowels that we should expect from a poet who proposed to assimilate his diction to that of the Italians.

After the age of Milton the connection between Italy and England is interrupted. In the seventeenth century Italy herself had sunk into comparative stupor, and her literature was trivial. France not only swayed the political destinies of Europe, but also took the lead in intellectual culture. Consequently our poets turned from Italy to France, and the French spirit pervaded English literature throughout the period of the Restoration and the reigns of William and Queen Anne. Yet during this prolonged reaction against the earlier movement of English literature, as manifested in Elizabethanism, the influence of Italy was not wholly extinct. Dryden's *Tales from Boccaccio* are no insignificant contribution to our poetry; and his *Palamon and Arcite*, through Chaucer, returns to the same source. But when, at the beginning of this century, the Elizabethan tradition was revived, then the Italian influence reappeared more vigorous than ever. The metre of *Don Juan*, first practised by Frere and then adopted by Lord Byron, is Pulci's octave stanza; the manner is that of Berni, Folengo, and the Abbé Casti, fused and heightened by the brilliance of Byron's genius into a new form. The subject of Shelley's strongest work of art is Beatrice Cenci. Rogers's poem is styled *Italy*. Byron's dramas are chiefly

Italian. Leigh Hunt repeats the tale of Francesca da Rimini. Keats versifies Boccaccio's *Isabella*. Passing to contemporary poets, Rossetti has acclimatized in English the metres and the manner of the earliest Italian lyrists. Swinburne dedicates his noblest song to the spirit of liberty in Italy. Even George Eliot and Tennyson have each of them turned stories of Boccaccio into verse. The best of Mrs. Browning's poems—*Casa Guidi Windows* and *Aurora Leigh*—are steeped in Italian thought and Italian imagery. Browning's longest poem is a tale of Italian crime; his finest studies in the *Men and Women* are portraits of Italian character of the Renaissance period. But there is more than any mere enumeration of poets and their work can set forth in the connection between Italy and England. That connection, so far as the poetical imagination is concerned, is vital. As poets in the truest sense of the word, we English live and breathe through sympathy with the Italians. The magnetic touch which is required to inflame the imagination of the North is derived from Italy. The nightingales of English song who make our oak and beech copses resonant in spring with purest melody are migratory birds who have charged their souls in the South with the spirit of beauty, and who return to warble native wood-notes in a tongue which is their own.

What has hitherto been said about the debt of the English poets to Italy may seem to imply that our literature can be regarded as, to some extent, a parasite on that of the Italians. Against such a conclusion no protest too energetic could be uttered. What we have derived directly from the Italian poets are, first, some metres, especially the sonnet and the octave stanza, though the latter has never taken firm root in England. "Terza rima," attempted by Shelley, Byron, Morris, and Mrs. Browning, has not yet become acclimatized. Blank verse, although originally remodelled by Surrey upon the *versi sciolti* of the Italians,

has departed widely from Italian precedent, first by its decasyllabic structure, whereas Italian verse consists of hendecasyllables, and, secondly, by its greater force, plasticity, and freedom. The Spenserian stanza, again, is a new and original metre peculiar to our literature; though it is possible that but for the complex structures of Italian lyric verse it might not have been fashioned for the *Faerie Queene*. Lastly, the so-called heroic couplet is native to England; at any rate, it is in no way related to Italian metre. Therefore the only true Italian exotic adopted without modification into our literature is the sonnet.

In the next place, we owe to the Italians the subject-matter of many of our most famous dramas and our most delightful tales in verse. But the English treatment of these histories and fables has been uniformly independent and original. Comparing Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with Bandello's tale, Webster's *Duchess of Malfy* with the version given from the Italian in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, and Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boccaccio, we perceive at once that the English poets have used their Italian models merely as outlines to be filled in with freedom—as the canvas to be embroidered with a tapestry of vivid groups. Nothing is more manifest than the superiority of the English genius over the Italian in all dramatic qualities of intense passion, profound analysis, and living portrayal of character in action. The mere rough detail of Shakespeare's *Othello* is to be found in Cinthio's Collection of Novelle; but let an unprejudiced reader peruse the original, and he will be no more deeply affected by it than by any touching story of treachery, jealousy, and hapless innocence. The wily subtleties of Iago, the soldierly frankness of Cassio, the turbulent and volcanic passions of Othello, the charm of Desdemona, and the whole tissue of vivid incidents which make *Othello* one of the most tremendous extant tragedies of characters in combat, are Shake-

speare's, and only Shakespeare's. This instance, indeed, enables us exactly to indicate what the English owed to Italy and what was essentially their own. From that Southern land of Circe about which they dreamed, and which now and then they visited, came to their imaginations a spirit-stirring breath of inspiration. It was to them the country of marvels, of mysterious crimes, of luxurious gardens and splendid skies, where love was more passionate and life more picturesque, and hate more bloody and treachery more black, than in our Northern climes. Italy was a spacious grove of wizardry, which mighty poets, on the quest of fanciful adventure, trod with fascinated senses and quickened pulses. But the strong brain which converted what they heard and read and saw of that charmed land into the stuff of golden romance or sable tragedy was their own.

English literature has been defined a literature of genius. Our greatest work in art has been achieved not so much by inspiration, subordinate to sentiments of exquisite good taste or guided by observance of classical models, as by audacious sallies of pure inventive power. This is true as a judgment of that constellation which we call our drama, of the meteor Byron, of Milton and Dryden, who are the Jupiter and the Mars of our poetic system, and of the stars which stud our literary firmament under the names of Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Chatterton, Scott, Coleridge, Clough, Blake, Browning, Swinburne, Tennyson. There are only a very few of the English poets, Pope and Gray, for example, in whom the free instincts of genius are kept systematically in check by the laws of the reflective understanding. Now Italian literature is in this respect all unlike our own. It began, indeed, with Dante, as a literature pre-eminently of genius; but the spirit of scholarship assumed the sway as early as the days of Petrarch and Boccaccio, and after them Italian has been consistently a literature of taste. By this I mean that even the greatest Italian

poets have sought to render their style correct, have endeavored to subordinate their inspiration to what they considered the rules of sound criticism, and have paid serious attention to their manner as independent of the matter they wished to express. The passion for antiquity, so early developed in Italy, delivered the later Italian poets bound hand and foot into the hands of Horace. Poliziano was content to reproduce the classic authors in a mosaic work of exquisite translations. Tasso was essentially a man of talent, producing work of chastened beauty by diligent attention to the rule and method of his art. Even Ariosto submitted the liberty of his swift spirit to canons of prescribed elegance. While our English poets have conceived and executed without regard for the opinion of the learned and without obedience to the usages of language—Shakespeare, for example, producing tragedies which set Aristotle at defiance, and Milton engrafting Latinisms on the native idiom—the Italian poets thought and wrote with the fear of Academies before their eyes, and studied before all things to maintain the purity of the Tuscan tongue. The consequence is that the Italian and English literatures are eminent for very different excellences. All that is forcible in the dramatic presentation of life and character and action, all that is audacious in imagination and capricious in fancy, whatever strength style can gain from the sallies of original and untrammelled eloquence, whatever beauty is derived from spontaneity and native grace, belong in abundant richness to the English. On the other hand, the Italian poets present us with masterpieces of correct and studied diction, with carefully elaborated machinery, and with a style maintained at a uniform level of dignified correctness. The weakness of the English proceeds from inequality and extravagance; it is the weakness of self-confident vigor, intolerant of rule, rejoicing in its own exuberant resources. The weakness of the Italian is due to timidity and moderation; it is the weakness

that springs not so much from a lack of native strength as from the over-anxious expenditure of strength upon the attainment of finish, polish, and correctness. Hence the two nations have everything to learn from one another. Modern Italian poets may seek by contact with Shakespeare and Milton to gain a freedom from the trammels imposed upon them by the slavish followers of Petrarch; while the attentive perusal of Tasso should be recommended to all English people who have no ready access to the masterpieces of Greek and Latin literature.

Another point of view may be gained by noticing the predominant tone of the two literatures. Whenever English poetry is really great, it approximates to the tragic and the stately; whereas the Italians are peculiarly felicitous in the smooth and pleasant style, which combines pathos with amusement, and which does not trespass beyond the region of beauty into the domain of sublimity or terror. Italian poetry is analogous to Italian painting and Italian music; it bathes the soul in a plenitude of charms, investing even the most solemn subjects with loveliness. Rembrandt and Albert Dürer depict the tragedies of the Sacred History with a serious and awful reality; Italian painters, with a few rare but illustrious exceptions, shrink from approaching them from any point of view but that of harmonious melancholy. Even so the English poets stir the soul to its very depths by their profound and earnest delineations of the stern and bitter truths of the world; Italian poets environ all things with the golden haze of an artistic harmony; so that the soul is agitated by no pain at strife with the persuasions of pure beauty.

POPULAR ITALIAN POETRY OF THE RENAISSANCE.

THE semi-popular poetry of the Italians in the fifteenth century formed an important branch of their national literature, and flourished independently of the courtly and scholastic studies which gave a special character to the golden age of the revival. While the latter tended to separate the people from the cultivated classes, the former established a new link of connection between them, different indeed from that which existed when smiths and carters repeated the Canzoni of Dante by heart in the fourteenth century, but still sufficiently real to exercise a weighty influence over the national development. Scholars like Angelo Poliziano, princes like Lorenzo de' Medici, men of letters like Feo Belcari and Benivieni, borrowed from the people forms of poetry which they handled with refined taste, and appropriated to the uses of polite literature. The most important of these forms, native to the people but assimilated by the learned classes, were the Miracle Play, or "Sacra Rappresentazione;" the "Ballata," or lyric to be sung while dancing; the "Canto Carnascialesco," or Carnival Chorus; the "Rispetto," or short love-ditty; the "Lauda," or hymn; the "Maggio," or May-song; and the "Madrigale," or little part-song.

At Florence, where even under the despotism of the Medici a show of republican life still lingered, all classes joined in the amusements of carnival and spring-time; and this poetry of the dance, the pageant, and the villa flourished side by side with the more serious efforts of the humanistic muse. It is not my purpose in this place to inquire into the origins of each lyrical type,

to discuss the alterations they may have undergone at the hands of educated versifiers, or to define their several characteristics; but only to offer translations of such as seem to me best suited to represent the genius of the people and the age.

In the composition of the poetry in question, Angelo Poliziano was indubitably the most successful. This giant of learning, who filled the lecture-rooms of Florence with students of all nations, and whose critical and rhetorical labors marked an epoch in the history of scholarship, was by temperament a poet, and a poet of the people. Nothing was easier for him than to throw aside his professor's mantle, and to improvise *ballate* for the girls to sing as they danced their "Carola" upon the Piazza di Santa Trinità in summer evenings. The peculiarity of this lyric is that it starts with a couplet, which also serves as refrain, supplying the rhyme to each successive stanza. The stanza itself is identical with our rime royal, if we count the couplet in the place of the seventh line. The form is in itself so graceful and is so beautifully treated by Poliziano that I cannot content myself with fewer than four of his *ballate*.* The first is written on the world-old theme of "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may."

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

Violets and lilies grew on every side
Mid the green grass, and young flowers wonderful,
Golden and white and red and azure-eyed;
Toward which I stretched my hands, eager to pull
Plenty to make my fair curls beautiful,
To crown my rippling curls with garlands gay.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
In a green garden in mid month of May.

* I need hardly guard myself against being supposed to mean that the form of *ballata* in question was the only one of its kind in Italy.

But when my lap was full of flowers I spied
 Roses at last, roses of every hue;
 Therefore I ran to pluck their ruddy pride,
 Because their perfume was so sweet and true
 That all my soul went forth with pleasure new,
 With yearning and desire too soft to say.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
 In a green garden in mid month of May.

I gazed and gazed. Hard task it were to tell
 How lovely were the roses in that hour:
 One was but peeping from her verdant shell,
 And some were faded, some were scarce in flower;
 Then Love said: Go, pluck from the blooming bower
 Those that thou seest ripe upon the spray.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
 In a green garden in mid month of May.

For when the full rose quits her tender sheath,
 When she is sweetest and most fair to see,
 Then is the time to place her in thy wreath,
 Before her beauty and her freshness flee.
 Gather ye therefore roses with great glee,
 Sweet girls, or ere their perfume pass away.

I went a roaming, maidens, one bright day,
 In a green garden in mid month of May.

The next ballata is less simple, but is composed with the same intention. It may here be parenthetically mentioned that the courtly poet, when he applied himself to this species of composition, invented a certain rusticity of incident, scarcely in keeping with the spirit of his art. It was in fact a conventional feature of this species of verse that the scene should be laid in the country, where the burgher, on a visit to his villa, is supposed to meet

with a rustic beauty who captivates his eyes and heart. Guido Cavalcanti, in his celebrated ballata, "In un boschetto trovai pastorella," struck the key-note of this music, which, it may be reasonably conjectured, was imported into Italy through Provençal literature from the pastorals of Northern France. The lady so quaintly imaged by a bird in the following ballata of Poliziano is supposed to have been Monna Ippolita Leoncina of Prato, white-throated, golden-haired, and dressed in crimson silk.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

I do not think the world a field could show
With herbs of perfume so surpassing rare;
But when I passed beyond the green hedgerow,
A thousand flowers around me flourished fair,
White, pied and crimson, in the summer air;
Among the which I heard a sweet bird's tone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Her song it was so tender and so clear
That all the world listened with love; then I
With stealthy feet a-tiptoe drawing near,
Her golden head and golden wings could spy,
Her plumes that flashed like rubies neath the sky,
Her crystal beak and throat and bosom's zone.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Fain would I snare her, smit with mighty love;
But arrow-like she soared, and through the air
Fled to her nest upon the boughs above;
Wherefore to follow her is all my care,
For haply I might lure her by some snare
Forth from the woodland wild where she is flown.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

Yea, I might spread some net or woven wile ;
But since of singing she doth take such pleasure,
Without or other art or other guile
I seek to win her with a tuneful measure ;
Therefore in singing spend I all my leisure,
To make by singing this sweet bird my own.

I found myself one day all, all alone,
For pastime in a field with blossoms strewn.

The same lady is more directly celebrated in the next ballata, where Poliziano calls her by her name, Ippolita. I have taken the liberty of substituting Myrrha for this somewhat unmanageable word.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes there flieth, girt with fire,
An angel of our lord, a laughing boy,
Who lights in frozen hearts a flaming pyre,
And with such sweetness doth the soul destroy,
That while it dies, it murmurs forth its joy :
Oh blessed am I to dwell in Paradise !

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a virtue still doth move,
So swift and with so fierce and strong a flight,
That it is like the lightning of high Jove,
Riving of iron and adamant the might ;
Nathless the wound doth carry such delight
That he who suffers dwells in Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

From Myrrha's eyes a lovely messenger
Of joy so grave, so virtuous, doth flee,
That all proud souls are bound to bend to her.
So sweet her countenance, it turns the key
Of hard hearts locked in cold security :
Forth flies the prisoned soul to Paradise.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

In Myrrha's eyes beauty doth make her throne,
And sweetly smile and sweetly speak her mind :
Such grace in her fair eyes a man hath known
As in the whole wide world he scarce may find :
Yet if she slay him with a glance too kind,
He lives again beneath her gazing eyes.

He who knows not what thing is Paradise,
Let him look fixedly on Myrrha's eyes.

The fourth ballata sets forth the fifteenth-century Italian code of love, the code of the *Novelle*, very different in its avowed laxity from the high ideal of the *trecentisti* poets.

I ask no pardon if I follow Love ;
Since every gentle heart is thrall thereof.

From those who feel the fire I feel, what use
Is there in asking pardon ? These are so
Gentle, kind-hearted, tender, piteous,
That they will have compassion, well I know.
From such as never felt that honeyed woe,
I seek no pardon : naught they know of Love.

I ask no pardon if I follow Love ;
Since every gentle heart is thrall thereof.

Honor, pure love, and perfect gentleness,
Weighed in the scales of equity refined,
Are but one thing : beauty is naught or less,
Placed in a dame of proud and scornful mind.

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Who can rebuke me then if I am kind
So far as honesty comports and Love ?

I ask no pardon if I follow Love ;
Since every gentle heart is thrall thereof.

Let him rebuke me whose hard heart of stone
Ne'er felt of Love the summer in his vein !
I pray to Love that who hath never known
Love's power may ne'er be blessed with Love's great gain ;
But he who serves our lord with might and main,
May dwell forever in the fire of Love !

I ask no pardon if I follow Love ;
Since every gentle heart is thrall thereof.

Let him rebuke me without cause who will ;
For if he be not gentle, I fear naught :
My heart obedient to the same love still
Hath little heed of light words envy-fraught :
So long as life remains, it is my thought
To keep the laws of this so gentle Love.

I ask no pardon if I follow Love ;
Since every gentle heart is thrall thereof.

This ballata is put into a woman's mouth. Another, ascribed to Lorenzo de' Medici, expresses the sadness of a man who has lost the favor of his lady. It illustrates the well-known use of the word *Signore* for mistress in Florentine poetry.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me ?

Dances and songs and merry wakes I leave
To lovers fair, more fortunate and gay ;
Since to my heart so many sorrows cleave
That only doleful tears are mine for aye :
Who hath heart's ease may carol, dance, and play ;
While I am fain to weep continually.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me ?

I too had heart's ease once, for so Love willed,
When my lord loved me with love strong and great ;
But envious fortune my life's music stilled,
And turned to sadness all my gleeful state.
Ah me ! Death surely were less desolate
Than thus to live and love-neglected be !

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me ?

One only comfort soothes my heart's despair,
And mid this sorrow lends my soul some cheer ;
Unto my lord I ever yielded fair
Service of faith untainted pure and clear ;
If then I die thus guiltless, on my bier
It may be she will shed one tear for me.

How can I sing light-souled and fancy-free,
When my loved lord no longer smiles on me ?

The Florentine *Rispetto* was written for the most part in octave stanzas, detached or continuous. The octave stanza in Italian literature was an emphatically popular form ; and it is still largely used in many parts of the peninsula for the lyrical expression of emotion.* Poliziano did no more than treat it with his own facility, sacrificing the unstudied raciness of his popular models to literary elegance.

Here are a few of these detached stanzas, or *Rispetti Spicciolati* :

Upon that day when first I saw thy face,
I vowed with loyal love to worship thee.
Move, and I move ; stay, and I keep my place :
Whate'er thou dost, will I do equally.

* See p. 236.

In joy of thine I find most perfect grace,
And in thy sadness dwells my misery :
Laugh, and I laugh ; weep, and I, too, will weep.
Thus Love commands, whose laws I loving keep.

Nay, be not over-proud of thy great grace,
Lady ! for brief time is thy thief and mine.
White will he turn those golden curls that lace
Thy forehead and thy neck so marble-fine.
Lo ! while the flower still flourisheth apace,
Pluck it ; for beauty but awhile doth shine.
Fair is the rose at dawn ; but long ere night
Her freshness fades, her pride hath vanished quite.

Fire, fire ! Ho, water ! for my heart's afire !
Ho, neighbors ! help me, or by God I die !
See, with his standard, that great lord, Desire !
He sets my heart aflame : in vain I cry.
Too late, alas ! The flames mount high and higher.
Alack, good friends ! I faint, I fail, I die.
Ho ! water, neighbors mine ! no more delay !
My heart's a cinder if you do but stay.

Lo, may I prove to Christ a renegade,
And, dog-like, die in pagan Barbary ;
Nor may God's mercy on my soul be laid,
If ere for aught I shall abandon thee :
Before all-seeing God this prayer be made :
When I desert thee may death feed on me.
Now if thy hard heart scorn these vows, be sure
That without faith none may abide secure.

I ask not, Love, for any other pain
To make thy cruel foe and mine repent,
Only that thou shouldst yield her to the strain
Of these my arms, alone, for chastisement ;
Then would I clasp her so with might and main,
That she would learn to pity and relent,

And, in revenge for scorn and proud despite,
A thousand times I'd kiss her forehead white.

Not always do fierce tempests vex the sea,
Nor always clinging clouds offend the sky ;
Cold snows before the sunbeams haste to flee,
Disclosing flowers that 'neath their whiteness lie ;
The saints each one doth wait his day to see,
And time makes all things change ; so, therefore, I
Ween that 'tis wise to wait my turn, and say,
That who subdues himself deserves to sway.

It will be observed that the tone of these poems is not passionate nor elevated. Love as understood in Florence of the fifteenth century was neither ; nor was Poliziano the man to have revived Platonic mysteries or chivalrous enthusiasms. When the octave stanzas, written with this amorous intention, were strung together into a continuous poem, this form of verse took the title of *Rispetto Continuato*. In the collection of Poliziano's poems there are several examples of the long *rispetto*, carelessly enough composed, as may be gathered from the recurrence of the same stanzas in several poems. All repeat the old arguments, the old enticements to a less than lawful love. The one which I have chosen for translation, styled *Serenata ovvero Lettera in Istrambotti*, might be selected as an epitome of Florentine convention in the matter of love-making :

O thou of fairest fairs the first and queen,
Most courteous, kind, and honorable dame,
Thine ear unto thy servant's singing lean,
Who loves thee more than health or wealth or fame ;
For thou his shining planet still hast been,
And day and night he calls on thy fair name :
First wishing thee all good the world can give,
Next praying in thy gentle thoughts to live.

He humbly prayeth that thou shouldst be kind
To think upon his pure and perfect faith,
And that such mercy in thy heart and mind
Should reign as so much beauty argueth :
A thousand, thousand hints, or he were blind,
Of thy great courtesy he reckoneth :
Wherefore thy loyal subject now doth sue
Such guerdon only as shall prove them true.

He knows himself unmeet for love from thee,
Unmeet for merely gazing on thine eyes ;
Seeing thy comely squires so plenteous be,
That there is none but 'neath thy beauty sighs :
Yet since thou seekest fame and bravery,
Nor carest aught for gauds that others prize,
And since he strives to honor thee alway,
He still hath hope to gain thy heart one day.

Virtue that dwells untold, unknown, unseen,
Still findeth none to love or value it ;
Wherefore his faith, that hath so perfect been,
Not being known, can profit him no whit :
He would find pity in thine eyes, I ween,
If thou shouldst deign to make some proof of it ;
The rest may flatter, gape, and stand agaze ;
Him only faith above the crowd doth raise.

Suppose that he might meet thee once alone,
Face unto face, without or jealousy,
Or doubt or fear from false misgiving grown,
And tell his tale of grievous pain to thee,
Sure from thy breast he'd draw full many a moan,
And make thy fair eyes weep right plenteously :
Yea, if he had but skill his heart to show,
He scarce could fail to win thee by its woe.

Now art thou in thy beauty's blooming hour ;
Thy youth is yet in pure perfection's prime :

Make it thy pride to yield thy fragile flower,
Or look to find it paled by envious time ;
For none to stay the flight of years hath power,
And who culls roses caught by frosty rime ?
Give therefore to thy lover, give, for they
Too late repent who act not while they may.

Time flies ; and lo ! thou let'st it idly fly :
There is not in the world a thing more dear :
And if thou wait to see sweet May pass by,
Where find'st thou roses in the later year ?
He never can who lets occasion die :
Now that thou canst, stay not for doubt or fear ;
But by the forelock take the flying hour,
Ere change begins and clouds above thee lower.

Too long 'twixt yea and nay he hath been wrung ;
Whether he sleep or wake he little knows,
Or free or in the bands of bondage strung :
Nay, lady, strike, and let thy lover loose !
What joy hast thou to keep a captive hung ?
Kill him at once, or cut the cruel noose :
No more, I prithee, stay ; but take thy part :
Either relax the bow or speed the dart.

Thou feedest him on words and windiness,
On smiles and signs and bladders light as air ;
Saying thou fain wouldst comfort his distress,
But dar'st not, canst not : nay, dear lady fair,
All things are possible beneath the stress
Of will that flames above the soul's despair !
Dally no longer : up, set to thy hand ;
Or see his love unclothed and naked stand.

For he hath sworn, and by this oath will bide,
E'en though his life be lost in the endeavor,
To leave no way nor art nor wile untried
Until he pluck the fruit he sighs for ever :

And, though he still would spare thy honest pride,
 The knot that binds him he must loose or sever ;
 Thou, too, O lady, shouldst make sharp thy knife,
 If thou art fain to end this amorous strife.

Lo ! if thou lingerest still in dubious dread,
 Lest thou shouldst lose fair fame of honesty,
 Here hast thou need of wile and warhead,
 To test thy lover's strength in screening thee ;
 Indulge him, if thou find him well bestead,
 Knowing that smothered love flames outwardly :
 Therefore, seek means, search out some privy way ;
 Keep not the steed too long at idle play.

Or if thou heedest what those friars teach,
 I cannot fail, lady, to call thee fool :
 Well may they blame our private sins and preach ;
 But ill their acts match with their spoken rule ;
 The same pitch clings to all men, one and each.
 There, I have spoken : set the world to school !
 With this true proverb, too, be well acquainted :
 The devil's ne'er so black as he is painted.

Nor did our good Lord give such grace to thee
 That thou shouldst keep it buried in thy breast,
 But to reward thy servant's constancy,
 Whose love and loyal faith thou hast repressed :
 Think it no sin to be some trifle free,
 Because thou livest at a lord's behest ;
 For if he take enough to feed his fill,
 To cast the rest away were surely ill.

They find most favor in the sight of Heaven
 Who to the poor and hungry are most kind ;
 A hundred-fold shall thus to thee be given
 By God, who loves the free and generous mind ;
 Thrice strike thy breast, with pure contrition riven,
 Crying, I sinned ; my sin hath made me blind !—

He wants not much : enough if he be able
To pick up crumbs that fall beneath thy table.

Wherefore, O lady, break the ice at length ;
Make thou, too, trial of love's fruits and flowers :
When in thine arms thou feel'st thy lover's strength,
Thou wilt repent of all these wasted hours :
Husbands, they know not love, its breadth and length,
Seeing their hearts are not on fire like ours :
Things longed for give most pleasure ; this I tell thee ;
If still thou doubttest let the proof compel thee.

What I have spoken is pure gospel sooth ;
I have told all my mind, withholding naught :
And well, I ween, thou canst unhusk the truth,
And through the riddle read the hidden thought :
Perchance if Heaven still smile upon my youth,
Some good effect for me may yet be wrought :
Then fare thee well ; too many words offend :
She who is wise is quick to comprehend.

The levity of these love-declarations and the fluency of their vows show them to be "false as dicers' oaths," mere verses of the moment, made to please a facile mistress. One long poem, which cannot be styled a *rispetto*, but is rather a *canzone* of the legitimate type, stands out with distinctness from the rest of Poliziano's love-verses. It was written by him for Giuliano de' Medici, in praise of the fair Simonetta. The following version attempts to repeat its metrical effects in some measure :

My task it is, since thus Love wills, who strains
And forces all the world beneath his sway,
In lowly verse to say
The great delight that in my bosom reigns.
For if, perchance, I took but little pains
To tell some part of all the joy I find,
I might be deem'd unkind

By one who knew my heart's deep happiness.
 He feels but little bliss who hides his bliss ;
 Small joy hath he whose joy is never sung ;
 And he who curbs his tongue
 Through cowardice knows but of love the name.
 Wherefore, to succor and augment the fame
 Of that pure, virtuous, wise, and lovely May,
 Who like the star of day
 Shines mid the stars, or like the rising sun,
 Forth from my burning heart the words shall run.
 Far, far be envy, far be jealous fear,
 With discord dark and drear,
 And all the choir that is of love the foe.—
 The season had returned when soft winds blow,
 The season friendly to young lovers coy,
 Which bids them clothe their joy
 In divers garbs and many a masked disguise.
 Then I to track the game 'neath April skies
 Went forth in raiment strange apparellèd,
 And by kind fate was led
 Unto the spot where stayed my soul's desire.
 The beauteous nymph who feeds my soul with fire,
 I found in gentle, pure, and prudent mood,
 In graceful attitude,
 Loving and courteous, holy, wise, benign.
 So sweet, so tender was her face divine,
 So gladsome, that in those celestial eyes
 Shone perfect paradise,
 Yea, all the good that we poor mortals crave.
 Around her was a band so nobly brave
 Of beauteous dames, that, as I gazed at these,
 Methought heaven's goddesses
 That day for once had deigned to visit earth.
 But she who gives my soul sorrow and mirth
 Seemed Pallas in her gait, and in her face
 Venus; for every grace

And beauty of the world in her combined.
Merely to think, far more to tell my mind,
Of that most wondrous sight confoundeth me;
For mid the maidens she
Who most resembled her was found most rare.
Call ye another first among the fair;
Not first, but sole before my lady set:
Lily and violet
And all the flowers below the rose must bow.
Down from her royal head and lustrous brow
The golden curls fell sportively unpent,
While through the choir she went
With feet well lessoned to the rhythmic sound.
Her eyes, though scarcely raised above the ground,
Sent me by stealth a ray divinely fair;
But still her jealous hair
Broke the bright beam, and veiled her from my gaze.
She, born and nursed in heaven for angels' praise,
No sooner saw this wrong, than back she drew,
With hand of purest hue,
Her truant curls with kind and gentle mien.
Then from her eyes a soul so fiery keen,
So sweet a soul of love she cast on mine,
That scarce can I divine
How then I 'scaped from burning utterly.
These are the first fair signs of love to be,
That bound my heart with adamant, and these
The matchless courtesies
Which, dreamlike, still before mine eyes must hover.
This is the honeyed food she gave her lover,
To make him, so it pleased her, half divine;
Nectar is not so fine,
Nor ambrosy, the fabled feast of Jove.
Then, yielding proofs more clear and strong of love,
As though to show the faith within her heart,
She moved, with subtle art,

Her feet accordant to the amorous air.
 But while I gaze and pray to God that ne'er
 Might cease that happy dance angelical,
 O, harsh, unkind recall !
 Back to the banquet was she beckonèd.
 She, with her face at first with pallor spread,
 Then tinted with a blush of coral dye,
 " The ball is best !" did cry,
 Gentle in tone and smiling as she spake.
 But from her eyes celestial forth did break
 Favor at parting ; and I well could see
 Young love confusedly
 Enclosed within the furtive fervent gaze,
 Heating his arrows at their beauteous rays,
 For war with Pallas and with Dian cold.
 Fairer than mortal mould,
 She moved majestic with celestial gait ;
 And with her hand her robe in royal state
 Raised, as she went with pride ineffable.
 Of me I cannot tell,
 Whether alive or dead I there was left.
 Nay, dead, methinks ! since I of thee was reft,
 Light of my life ! and yet, perchance, alive—
 Such virtue to revive
 My lingering soul possessed thy beauteous face.
 But if that powerful charm of thy great grace
 Could then thy loyal lover so sustain,
 Why comes there not again
 More often or more soon the sweet delight ?
 Twice hath the wandering moon with borrowed light
 Stored from her brother's rays her crescent horn,
 Nor yet hath fortune borne
 Me on the way to so much bliss again.
 Earth smiles anew ; fair spring renews her reign :
 The grass and every shrub once more is green ;
 The amorous birds begin,

From winter loosed, to fill the field with song.
See how in loving pairs the cattle throng ;
The bull, the ram, their amorous jousts enjoy :
Thou maiden, I a boy,
Shall we prove traitors to love's law for aye ?
Shall we these years that are so fair let fly ?
Wilt thou not put thy flower of youth to use ?
Or with thy beauty choose
To make him blest who loves thee best of all ?
Haply I am some hind who guards the stall,
Or of vile lineage, or with years outworn,
Poor, or a cripple born,
Or faint of spirit that you spurn me so ?
Nay, but my race is noble and doth grow
With honor to our land, with pomp and power ;
My youth is yet in flower,
And it may chance some maiden sighs for me.
My lot it is to deal right royally
With all the goods that fortune spreads around,
For still they more abound,
Shaken from her full lap, the more I waste.
My strength is such as whoso tries shall taste ;
Circled with friends, with favors crowned am I :
Yet though I rank so high
Among the blest, as men may reckon bliss,
Still without thee, my hope, my happiness,
It seems a sad and bitter thing to live !
Then stint me not, but give
That joy which holds all joys enclosed in one.
Let me pluck fruits at last, not flowers alone !

With much that is frigid, artificial, and tedious in this old-fashioned love-song, there is a curious monotony of sweetness which commends it to our ears ; and he who reads it may remember the profile portrait of Simonetta from the hand of Piero della Francesca in the Pitti Palace at Florence.

It is worth comparing Poliziano's treatment of popular or semi-popular verse-forms with his imitations of Petrarch's manner. For this purpose I have chosen a *canzone*, clearly written in competition with the celebrated "Chiare, fresche e dolci acque," of Laura's lover. While closely modelled upon Petrarch's form and similar in motive, this canzone preserves Poliziano's special qualities of fluency and emptiness of content.

Hills, valleys, caves, and fells,
 With flowers and leaves and herbage spread ;
 Green meadows ; shadowy groves where light is low ;
 Lawns watered with the rills
 That cruel Love hath made me shed,
 Cast from these cloudy eyes so dark with woe ;
 Thou stream that still dost know
 What fell pang's pierce my heart,
 So dost thou murmur back my moan ;
 Lone bird that chantest tone for tone,
 While in our descant drear Love sings his part ;
 Nymphs, woodland wanderers, wind, and air ;
 List to the sound outpoured from my despair !
 Seven times and once more seven
 The roseate dawn her beauteous brow
 Enwreathed with orient jewels hath displayed ;
 Cynthia once more in heaven
 Hath orb'd her horns with silver now ;
 While in sea-waves her brother's light was laid ;
 Since this high mountain glade
 Felt the white footstep fall
 Of that proud lady who to spring
 Converts whatever woodland thing
 She may o'ershadow, touch, or heed at all.
 Here bloom the flowers, the grasses spring
 From her bright eyes, and drink what mine must bring.
 Yea, nourished with my tears
 Is every little leaf I see,

And the stream rolls therewith a prouder wave.
Ah me ! through what long years
Will she withhold her face from me,
Which stills the stormy skies howe'er they rave ?
Speak ! or in grove or cave
If one hath seen her stray,
Plucking amid those grasses green
Wreaths for her royal brows serene,
Flowers white and blue and red and golden gay !
Nay, prithee, speak, if pity dwell
Among these woods, within this leafy dell !
O Love ! 'twas here we saw,
Beneath the new-fledged leaves that spring
From this old beech, her fair form lowly laid :—
The thought renews my awe !
How sweetly did her tresses fling
Waves of wreathed gold unto the winds that strayed !
Fire, frost within me played,
While I beheld the bloom
Of laughing flowers—O day of bliss !—
Around those tresses meet and kiss,
And roses in her lap of Love the home !
Her grace, her port divinely fair,
Describe it, Love ! myself I do not dare.
In mute intent surprise
I gazed, as when a hind is seen
To dote upon its image in a rill ;
Drinking those love-lit eyes,
Those hands, that face, those words serene,
That song which with delight the heaven did fill,
That smile which thralls me still,
Which melteth stones unkind,
Which in this woodland wilderness
Tames every beast and stills the stress
Of hurrying waters. Would that I could find
Her footprints upon field or grove !
I should not then be envious of Jove.

Thou cool stream rippling by,
 Where oft it pleasèd her to dip
 Her naked foot, how blest art thou !
 Ye branching trees on high,
 That spread your gnarled roots on the lip
 Of yonder hanging rock to drink heaven's dew !
 She often leaned on you,
 She who is my life's bliss !
 Thou ancient beech with moss o'ergrown,
 How do I envy thee thy throne,
 Found worthy to receive such happiness !
 Ye winds, how blissful must ye be,
 Since ye have borne to heaven her harmony !
 The winds that music bore,
 And wafted it to God on high,
 That Paradise might have the joy thereof.
 Flowers here she plucked, and wore
 Wild roses from the thorn hard by :
 This air she lightened with her look of love :
 This running stream above,
 She bent her face !—Ah me !
 Where am I ? What sweet makes me swoon ?
 What calm is in the kiss of noon ?
 Who brought me here ? Who speaks ? What melody ?
 Whence came pure peace into my soul ?
 What joy hath rapt me from my own control ?

Poliziano's refrain is always : "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. It is spring-time now and youth. Winter and old age are coming !" A *Maggio*, or May-day song, describing the games, dances, and jousting-matches of the Florentine lads upon the morning of the first of May, expresses this facile philosophy of life with a quaintness that recalls Herrick. It will be noticed that the *Maggio* is built, so far as rhymes go, on the same system as Poliziano's ballata. It has considerable historical interest, for the opening couplet is said to be Guido Cavalcanti's, while the

whole poem is claimed by Roscoe for Lorenzo de' Medici, and by Carducci with better reason for Poliziano.

Welcome in the May
And the woodland garland gay !
Welcome in the jocund spring
Which bids all men lovers be !
Maidens, up with carolling,
With your sweethearts stout and free,
With roses and with blossoms ye
Who deck yourselves this first of May !
Up and forth into the pure
Meadows, mid the trees and flowers !
Every beauty is secure
With so many bachelors :
Beasts and birds amid the bowers
Burn with love this first of May.
Maidens, who are young and fair,
Be not harsh, I counsel you ;
For your youth cannot repair
Her prime of spring, as meadows do :
None be proud, but all be true
To men who love, this first of May.
Dance and carol every one
Of our band so bright and gay !
See your sweethearts how they run
Through the jousts for you to-day !
She who saith her lover nay
Will deflower the sweets of May.
Lads in love take sword and shield
To make pretty girls their prize :
Yield ye, merry maidens, yield
To your lovers' vows and sighs :
Give his heart back ere it dies :
Wage not war this first of May.

He who steals another's heart,
 Let him give his own heart, too :
 Who's the robber? 'Tis the smart
 Little cherub Cupid, who
 Homage comes to pay with you,
 Damsels, to the first of May.

 Love comes smiling ; round his head
 Lilies white and roses meet :
 'Tis for you his flight is sped.
 Fair one, haste our king to greet :
 Who will fling him blossoms sweet
 Soonest on this first of May ?

 Welcome, stranger ! welcome, king !
 Love, what hast thou to command ?
 That each girl with wreaths should ring
 Her lover's hair with loving hand,
 That girls small and great should band
 In Love's ranks this first of May.

The *Canto Carnascialesco*, for the final development, if not for the invention, of which all credit must be given to Lorenzo de' Medici, does not greatly differ from the Maggio in structure. It admitted, however, of great varieties, and was generally more complex in its interweaving of rhymes. Yet the essential principle of an exordium which should also serve for a refrain was rarely, if ever, departed from. Two specimens of the Carnival Song will serve to bring into close contrast two very different aspects of Florentine history. The earlier was composed by Lorenzo de' Medici at the height of his power and in the summer of Italian independence. It was sung by masquers attired in classical costume, to represent Bacchus and his crew.

Fair is youth and void of sorrow ;
 But it hourly flies away.—
 Youths and maids, enjoy to-day ;
 Naught ye know about to-morrow.

This is Bacchus and the bright
Ariadne, lovers true!
They, in flying time's despite,
Each with each find pleasure new;
These their Nymphs, and all their crew
Keep perpetual holiday.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Naught ye know about to-morrow.

These blithe Satyrs, wanton-eyed,
Of the Nymphs are paramours;
Through the caves and forests wide
They have snared them mid the flowers;
Warmed with Bacchus, in his bowers,
Now they dance and leap alway.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Naught ye know about to-morrow.

These fair Nymphs, they are not loath
To entice their lovers' wiles.
None but thankless folk and rough
Can resist when Love beguiles.
Now enlaced, with wreathèd smiles,
All together dance and play.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Naught ye know about to-morrow.

See this load behind them plodding
On the ass! Silenus he,
Old and drunken, merry, nodding,
Full of years and jollity;
Though he goes so swayingly,
Yet he laughs and quaffs alway.—
Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
Naught ye know about to-morrow.

Midas treads a wearier measure:
All he touches turns to gold:
If there be no taste of pleasure,
What's the use of wealth untold?

What's the joy his fingers hold,
 When he's forced to thirst for aye?—
 Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
 Naught ye know about to-morrow.

Listen well to what we're saying;
 Of to-morrow have no care!
 Young and old together playing,
 Boys and girls, be blithe as air!
 Every sorry thought forswear!
 Keep perpetual holiday.—
 Youths and maids, enjoy to-day;
 Naught ye know about to-morrow.

Ladies and gay lovers young!
 Long live Bacchus, live Desire!
 Dance and play; let songs be sung;
 Let sweet love your bosoms fire;
 In the future come what may!—
 Youths and maids, enjoy to-day!
 Naught ye know about to-morrow.

Fair is youth and void of sorrow;
 But it hourly flies away.

The next, composed by Antonio Alamanni, after Lorenzo's death and the ominous passage of Charles VIII., was sung by maskers habited as skeletons. The car they rode on was a Car of Death designed by Piero di Cosimo, and their music was purposely gloomy. If in the jovial days of the Medici the streets of Florence had rung to the thoughtless refrain, "Naught ye know about to-morrow," they now re-echoed with a cry of "Penitence;" for times had strangely altered, and the heedless past had brought forth a doleful present. The last stanza of Alamanni's chorus is a somewhat clumsy attempt to adapt the too real moral of his subject to the customary mood of the Carnival.

Sorrow, tears, and penitence
Are our doom of pain for aye:
This dead concourse riding by
Hath no cry but Penitence!

E'en as you are, once were we:
You shall be as now we are:
We are dead men, as you see:
We shall see you dead men, where
Naught avails to take great care,
After sins, of penitence.

We too in the Carnival
Sang our love-songs through the town;
Thus from sin to sin we all
Headlong, heedless, tumbled down—
Now we cry, the world around,
Penitence! oh, penitence!

Senseless, blind, and stubborn fools!
Time steals all things as he rides:
Honors, glories, states, and schools,
Pass away, and naught abides;
Till the tomb our carcass hides,
And compels this penitence.

This sharp scythe you see us bear,
Brings the world at length to woe:
But from life to life we fare;
And that life is joy or woe:
All heaven's bliss on him doth flow
Who on earth does penitence.

Living here, we all must die;
Dying, every soul shall live:
For the King of kings on high
This fixed ordinance doth give:
Lo, you all are fugitive!
Penitence! Cry Penitence!

Torment great and grievous dole
 Hath the thankless heart mid you :
 But the man of piteous soul
 Finds much honor in our crew :
 Love for loving is the due
 That prevents this penitence.

Sorrow, tears, and penitence
 Are our doom of pain for aye :
 This dead concourse riding by
 Hath no cry but Penitence !

One song for dancing, composed less upon the type of the *bal-lata* than on that of the carnival song, may here be introduced, not only in illustration of the varied forms assumed by this style of poetry, but also because it is highly characteristic of Tuscan town-life. This poem in the vulgar style has been ascribed to Lorenzo de' Medici, but probably without due reason. It describes the manners and customs of female street gossips.

Since you beg with such a grace,
 How can I refuse a song,
 Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
 On the follies of the place ?

Courteously on you I call ;
 Listen well to what I sing :
 For my roundelay to all
 May perchance instruction bring,
 And of life good lessoning.—
 When in company you meet,
 Or sit spinning, all the street
 Clamors like a market-place.

Thirty of you there may be ;
 Twenty-nine are sure to buzz,
 And the single silent she
 Racks her brains about her coz :
 Mrs. Buzz and Mrs. Huzz.

Mind your work, my ditty saith;
Do not gossip till your breath
Fails and leaves you black of face!

Governments go out and in:
You the truth must needs discover.
Is a girl about to win
A brave husband in her lover?
Straight you set to talk him over:
"Is he wealthy?" "Does his coat
Fit?" "And has he got a vote?"
"Who's his father?" "What's his race?"

Out of window one head pokes;
Twenty others do the same:
Chatter, clatter! creaks and croaks!
All the year the same old game!
"See my spinning!" cries one dame,
"Five long ells of cloth, I trow!"
Cries another, "Mine must go,
Drat it, to the bleaching base!"

"Devil take the fowl!" says one:
"Mine are all bewitched, I guess;
Cocks and hens with vermin run,
Mangy, filthy, featherless."
Says another: "I confess
Every hair I drop I keep—
Plague upon it, in a heap
Falling off to my disgrace!"

If you see a fellow walk
Up or down the street and back,
How you nod and wink and talk,
Hurry-skurry, cluck and clack!
"What, I wonder, does he lack
Here about?" "There's something wrong!"
Till the poor man's made a song
For the female populace.

It were well you gave no thought
 To such idle company ;
 Shun these gossips, care for naught
 But the business that you ply.
 You who chatter, you who cry,
 Heed my words ; be wise, I pray :
 Fewer, shorter stories say :
 Bide at home, and mind your place.

Since you beg with such a grace,
 How can I refuse a song,
 Wholesome, honest, void of wrong,
 On the follies of the place ?

The *madrigale*, intended to be sung in parts, was another species of popular poetry cultivated by the greatest of Italian writers. Without seeking examples from such men as Petrarch, Michael Angelo, or Tasso, who used it as a purely literary form, I will content myself with a few madrigals by anonymous composers, more truly popular in style, and more immediately intended for music.* The similarity both of manner and matter, between these little poems and the ballate, is obvious. There is the same affectation of rusticity in both.

Cogliendo per un prato.

Plucking white lilies in a field I saw
 Fair women, laden with young Love's delight :
 Some sang, some danced ; but all were fresh and bright.
 Then by the margin of a fount they leaned,
 And of those flowers made garlands for their hair—
 Wreaths for their golden tresses quaint and rare.
 Forth from the field I passed, and gazed upon
 Their loveliness, and lost my heart to one.

* The originals will be found in Carducci's *Studi Letterari*, p. 273 et seq. I have preserved their rhyming structure.

Togliendo l'una all' altra.

One from the other borrowing leaves and flowers,
I saw fair maidens 'neath the summer trees,
Weaving bright garlands with low love-ditties.
Mid that sweet sisterhood the loveliest
Turned her soft eyes to me, and whispered, "Take!"
Love-lost I stood, and not a word I spake.
My heart she read, and her fair garland gave;
Therefore I am her servant to the grave.

Appress' un fiume chiaro.

Hard by a crystal stream
Girls and maids were dancing round
A lilac with fair blossoms crowned.
Mid these I spied out one
So tender-sweet, so love-laden,
She stole my heart with singing then:
Love in her face so lovely-kind
And eyes and hands my soul did bind.

Di riva in riva.

From lawn to lea Love led me down the valley,
Seeking my hawk, where 'neath a pleasant hill
I spied fair maidens bathing in a rill.
Lina was there all loveliness excelling;
The pleasure of her beauty made me sad,
And yet at sight of her my soul was glad.
Downward I cast mine eyes with modest seeming,
And all atremble from the fountain fled:
For each was naked as her maidenhead.
Thence singing fared I through a flowery plain,
Where by-and-by I found my hawk again!

Nel chiaro fiume.

Down a fair streamlet crystal-clear and pleasant
I went a fishing all alone one day,
And spied three maidens bathing there at play.

Of love they told each other honeyed stories,
 While with white hands they smote the stream, to wet
 Their sunbright hair in the pure rivulet.
 Gazing I crouched among thick flowering leafage,
 Till one who spied a rustling branch on high,
 Turned to her comrades with a sudden cry,
 And "Go! Nay, prithee go!" she called to me:
 "To stay were surely but scant courtesy."

Quel sole che nutrica.

The sun which makes a lily bloom,
 Leans down at times on her to gaze—
 Fairer, he deems, than his fair rays:
 Then, having looked a little while,
 He turns and tells the saints in bliss
 How marvellous her beauty is.
 Thus up in heaven with flute and string
 Thy loveliness the angels sing.

Di novo è giunt'.

Lo! here hath come an errant knight
 On a barbed charger clothed in mail:
 His archers scatter iron hail.
 At brow and breast his mace he aims;
 Who therefore hath not arms of proof,
 Let him live locked by door and roof;
 Until Dame Summer on a day
 That grisly knight return to slay.

Poliziano's treatment of the octave stanza for Rispetti was comparatively popular. But in his poem of *La Giostra*, written to commemorate the victory of Giuliano de' Medici in a tournament and to celebrate his mistress, he gave a new and richer form to the metre which Boccaccio had already used for epic verse. The slight and uninteresting framework of this poem, which opened

a new sphere for Italian literature, and prepared the way for Ariosto's golden cantos, might be compared to one of those wire-baskets which children steep in alum-water and incrust with crystals, sparkling, artificial, beautiful with colors not their own. The mind of Poliziano held, as it were, in solution all the images and thoughts of antiquity, all the riches of his native literature. In that vast reservoir of poems and mythologies and phrases, so patiently accumulated, so tenaciously preserved, so thoroughly assimilated, he plunged the trivial subject he had chosen, and triumphantly presented to the world the *spolia opima* of scholarship and taste. What mattered it that the theme was slight? The art was perfect, the result splendid. One canto of one hundred and twenty-five stanzas describes the youth of Giuliano, who sought to pass his life among the woods, a hunter dead to love, but who was doomed to be ensnared by Cupid. The chase, the beauty of Simonetta, the palace of Venus, these are the three subjects of a book as long as the first Iliad. The second canto begins with dreams and prophecies of glory to be won by Giuliano in the tournament. But it stops abruptly. The tragic catastrophe of the Pazzi Conjuraction cut short Poliziano's panegyric by the murder of his hero. Meanwhile the poet had achieved his purpose. His *torso* presented to Italy a model of style, a piece of written art adequate to the great painting of the Renaissance period, a double star of poetry which blended the splendors of the ancient and the modern world. To render into worthy English the harmonies of Poliziano is a difficult task. Yet this must be attempted if an English reader is to gain any notion of the scope and substance of the Italian poet's art. In the first part of the poem we are placed, as it were, at the mid point between the *Hippolytus* of Euripides and Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. The cold hunter Giuliano is to see Simonetta, and, seeing, is to love her. This is how he first discovers the triumphant beauty :

White is the maid, and white the robe around her,
 With buds and roses and thin grasses pied;
 Enwreathèd folds of golden tresses crowned her,
 Shadowing her forehead fair with modest pride:
 The wild wood smiled; the thicket where he found her,
 To ease his anguish, bloomed on every side:
 Serene she sits, with gesture queenly mild,
 And with her brow tempers the tempests wild.*

After three stanzas of this sort, in which the poet's style is more apparent than the object he describes, occurs this charming picture:

Reclined he found her on the swarded grass
 In jocund mood; and garlands she had made
 Of every flower that in the meadow was,
 Or on her robe of many hues displayed;
 But when she saw the youth before her pass,
 Raising her timid head awhile she stayed;
 Then with her white hand gathered up her dress,
 And stood, lap-full of flowers, in loveliness.
 Then through the dewy field with footstep slow
 The lingering maid began to take her way,
 Leaving her lover in great fear and woe,
 For now he longs for naught but her alway:
 The wretch, who cannot bear that she should go,
 Strives with a whispered prayer her feet to stay;
 And thus at last, all trembling, all afire,
 In humble wise he breathes his soul's desire:
 "Whoe'er thou art, maid among maidens queen,
 Goddess, or nymph—nay, goddess seems most clear—
 If goddess, sure my Dian I have seen;
 If mortal, let thy proper self appear!
 Beyond terrestrial beauty is thy mien;
 I have no merit that I should be here!
 What grace of heaven, what lucky star benign
 Yields me the sight of beauty so divine?"

* Stanza 43. All references are made to Carducci's excellent edition, *Le Stanze, l'Orfeo e le Rime di Messer Angelo Ambrogini Poliziano*. Firenze, G. Barbéra, 1863.

A conversation ensues, after which Giuliano departs utterly lovesick, and Cupid takes wing exultingly for Cyprus, where his mother's palace stands. In the following picture of the house of Venus, who shall say how much of Ariosto's Alcina and Tasso's Armida is contained? Cupid arrives, and the family of Love is filled with joy at Giuliano's conquest. From the plan of the poem it is clear that its beauties are chiefly those of detail. They are, however, very great. How perfect, for example, is the richness combined with delicacy of the following description of a country life:

Book I. Stanzas 17-21.

How far more safe it is, how far more fair,
To chase the flying deer along the lea;
Through ancient woods to track their hidden lair,
Far from the town, with long-drawn subtlety:
To scan the vales, the hills, the limpid air,
The grass and flowers, clear ice, and streams so free;
To hear the birds wake from their winter trance,
The wind-stirred leaves and murmuring waters dance.

How sweet it were to watch the young goats hung
From toppling crags, cropping the tender shoot,
While in thick pleachèd shade the shepherd sung
His uncouth rural lay and woke his flute;
To mark, mid dewy grass, red apples flung,
And every bough thick set with ripening fruit,
The butting rams, kine lowing o'er the lea,
And cornfields waving like the windy sea.

Lo! how the rugged master of the herd
Before his flock unbars the wattled cote;
Then with his rod and many a rustic word
He rules their going: or 'tis sweet to note
The delver, when his toothèd rake hath stirred
The stubborn clod, his hoe the glebe hath smote;
Barefoot the country girl, with loosened zone,
Spins, while she keeps her geese 'neath yonder stone.

After such happy wise, in ancient years,
 Dwelt the old nations in the age of gold ;
 Nor had the fount been stirred of mothers' tears
 For sons in war's fell labor stark and cold ;
 Nor trusted they to ships the wild wind steers,
 Nor yet had oxen groaning ploughed the wold ;
 Their houses were huge oaks, whose trunks had store
 Of honey, and whose boughs thick acorns bore.

Nor yet, in that glad time, the accursed thirst
 Of cruel gold had fallen on this fair earth :
 Joyous in liberty they lived at first ;
 Unploughed the fields sent forth their teeming birth ;
 Till fortune, envious of such concord, burst
 The bond of law, and pity banned and worth ;
 Within their breasts sprang luxury and that rage
 Which men call love in our degenerate age.

We need not be reminded that these stanzas are almost a cento from Virgil, Hesiod, and Ovid. The merits of the translator, adapter, and combiner, who knew so well how to cull their beauties and adorn them with a perfect dress of modern diction, are so eminent that we cannot deny him the title of a great poet. It is always in picture-painting more than in dramatic presentation that Poliziano excels. Here is a bass-relief of Venus rising from the ocean foam :

Stanzas 99-107.

In Thetis' lap, upon the vexed Ægean,
 The seed deific from Olympus sown,
 Beneath dim stars and cycling empyrean
 Drifts like white foam across the salt waves blown ;
 Thence, born at last by movements hymenean,
 Rises a maid more fair than man hath known ;
 Upon her shell the wanton breezes waft her ;
 She nears the shore, while heaven looks down with laughter.

Seeing the carved work you would cry that real
Were shell and sea, and real the winds that blow ;
The lightning of the goddess' eyes you feel,
The smiling heavens, the elemental glow :
White-vested Hours across the smooth sands steal,
With loosened curls that to the breezes flow ;
Like, yet unlike, are all their beauteous faces,
E'en as befits a choir of sister Graces.

Well might you swear that on those waves were riding
The goddess with her right hand on her hair,
And with the other the sweet apple hiding ;
And that beneath her feet, divinely fair,
Fresh flowers sprang forth, the barren sands dividing ;
Then that, with glad smiles and enticements rare,
The three nymphs round their queen, embosoming her,
Threw the starred mantle soft as gossamer.

The one, with hands above her head upraised,
Upon her dewy tresses fits a wreath,
With ruddy gold and orient gems emblazed ;
The second hangs pure pearls her ears beneath ;
The third round shoulders white and breast hath placed
Such wealth of gleaming carcanets as sheathe
Their own fair bosoms, when the Graces sing
Among the gods with dance and carolling.

Thence might you see them rising toward the spheres,
Seated upon a cloud of silvery white ;
The trembling of the cloven air appears
Wrought in the stone, and heaven serenely bright ;
The gods drink in with open eyes and ears
Her beauty, and desire her bed's delight ;
Each seems to marvel with a mute amaze—
Their brows and foreheads wrinkle as they gaze.

The next quotation shows Venus in the lap of Mars, and visited
by Cupid :

Stanzas 122-124.

Stretched on a couch, outside the coverlid,
 Love found her, scarce unloosed from Mars' embrace;
 He, lying back within her bosom, fed
 His eager eyes on naught but her fair face;
 Roses above them like a cloud were shed,
 To reinforce them in the amorous chase;
 While Venus, quick with longings unsuppressed,
 A thousand times his eyes and forehead kissed.

 Above, around, young Loves on every side
 Played naked, darting birdlike to and fro;
 And one, whose plumes a thousand colors dyed,
 Fanned the shed roses as they lay arow;
 One filled his quiver with fresh flowers, and hied
 To pour them on the couch that lay below;
 Another, poised upon his pinions, through
 The falling shower soared shaking rosy dew:

 For, as he quivered with his tremulous wing,
 The wandering roses in their drift were stayed;—
 Thus none was weary of glad gambolling;
 Till Cupid came, with dazzling plumes displayed,
 Breathless; and round his mother's neck did fling
 His languid arms, and with his winnowing made
 Her heart burn:—very glad and bright of face,
 But, with his flight, too tired to speak apace.

These pictures have in them the very glow of Italian painting. Sometimes we seem to see a quaint design of Piero di Cosimo, with bright tints and multitudinous small figures in a spacious landscape. Sometimes it is the languid grace of Botticelli, whose soul became possessed of classic inspiration as it were in dreams, and who has painted the birth of Venus almost exactly as Poliziano imagined it. Again, we seize the broader beauties of the Venetian masters, or the vehemence of Giulio Romano's pencil. To the last class belong the two next extracts:

Stanzas 104-107.

In the last square the great artificer
Had wrought himself crowned with Love's perfect palm ;
Black from his forge and rough, he runs to her,
Leaving all labor for her bosom's calm :
Lips joined to lips with deep love-longing stir
Fire in his heart, and in his spirit balm ;
Far fiercer flames through breast and marrow fly
Than those which heat his forge in Sicily.

Jove, on the other side, becomes a bull,
Goodly and white, at Love's behest, and rears
His neck beneath his rich freight beautiful :
She turns toward the shore that disappears,
With frightened gesture ; and the wonderful
Gold curls about her bosom and her ears
Float in the wind ; her veil waves, backward borne ;
This hand still clasps his back, and that his horn.

With naked feet close-tucked beneath her dress,
She seems to fear the sea that dares not rise :
So, imaged in a shape of drear distress,
In vain unto her comrades sweet she cries ;
They, left amid the meadow-flowers, no less
For lost Europa wail with weeping eyes :
Europa, sounds the shore, bring back our bliss !
But the bull swims and turns her feet to kiss.

Here Jove is made a swan, a golden shower,
Or seems a serpent, or a shepherd-swain,
To work his amorous will in secret hour ;
Here, like an eagle, soars he o'er the plain,
Love-led, and bears his Ganymede, the flower
Of beauty, mid celestial peers to reign ;
The boy with cypress hath his fair locks crowned,
Naked, with ivy wreathed his waist around.

Stanzas 110-112.

Lo! here again fair Ariadne lies,
 And to the deaf winds of false Theseus plains,
 And of the air and slumber's treacheries;
 Trembling with fear even as a reed that strains
 And quivers by the mere neath breezy skies:
 Her very speechless attitude complains—
 No beast there is so cruel as thou art,
 No beast less loyal to my broken heart.

Throned on a car, with ivy crowned and vine,
 Rides Bacchus, by two champing tigers driven:
 Around him on the sand deep-soaked with brine
 Satyrs and Bacchantes rush; the skies are riven
 With shouts and laughter; Fauns quaff bubbling wine
 From horns and cymbals; Nymphs, to madness driven,
 Trip, skip, and stumble; mixed in wild enlacements,
 Laughing they roll or meet for glad embracements.

Upon his ass Silenus, never sated,
 With thick, black veins, wherethrough the must is soaking,
 Nods his dull forehead with deep sleep belated;
 His eyes are wine-inflamed and red and smoking:
 Bold Mænads goad the ass so sorely weighted,
 With stinging thyrsi; he sways feebly poking
 The mane with bloated fingers; Fauns behind him,
 E'en as he falls, upon the crupper bind him.

We almost seem to be looking at the frescos in some Trastevereine palace, or at the canvas of one of the sensual Genoese painters. The description of the garden of Venus has the charm of somewhat artificial elegance, the exotic grace of style which attracts us in the earlier Renaissance work:

The leafy tresses of that timeless garden
 Nor fragile brine nor fresh snow dares to whiten;
 Frore winter never comes the rills to harden,
 Nor winds the tender shrubs and herbs to frighten;

Glad Spring is always here, a laughing warden ;
Nor do the seasons wane, but ever brighten ;
Here to the breeze young May, her curls unbinding,
With thousand flowers her wreath is ever winding.

Indeed, it may be said with truth that Poliziano's most eminent faculty as a descriptive poet corresponded exactly to the genius of the painters of his day. To produce pictures radiant with Renaissance coloring, and vigorous with Renaissance passion, was the function of his art, not to express profound thought or dramatic situations. This remark might be extended with justice to Ariosto and Tasso and Boiardo. The great narrative poets of the Renaissance in Italy were not dramatists; nor were their poems epics: their forte lay in the inexhaustible variety and beauty of their pictures.

Of Poliziano's plagiarism—if this be the right word to apply to the process of assimilation and selection by means of which the poet-scholar of Florence taught the Italians how to use the riches of the ancient languages and their own literature—here are some specimens. In stanza 42 of the *Giostra* he says of Simonetta:

E 'n lei discerne un non so che divino.

Dante has the line

Vostri risplende un non so che divino.

In the 44th he speaks about the birds:

E canta ogni augelletto in suo latino.

This comes from Cavalcanti's

E cantinne gli augelli
Ciaseuno in suo latino.

Stanza 45 is taken bodily from Claudian, Dante, and Cavalcanti. It would seem as though Poliziano wished to show that the classic and mediæval literature of Italy was all one, and that a poet of

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the Renaissance could carry on the continuous tradition in his own style. A line in stanza 54 seems perfectly original:

E già dall' alte ville il fumo esala.

It comes straight from Virgil:

Et jam summa procul villarum culmina fumant.

In the next stanza the line

Tal che 'l ciel tutto rasserenò d' intorno

is Petrarch's. So in the 56th is the phrase "il dolce andar celeste." In stanza 57,

Par che 'l cor del petto se gli schianti,

belongs to Boccaccio. In stanza 60 the first line,

La notte che le cose ci nasconde,

together with its rhyme, "sotto le amate fronde," is borrowed from the 23d canto of the *Paradiso*. In the second line, "Stellato ammanto," is Claudian's "stellantes sinus" applied to the heaven. When we reach the garden of Venus we find whole passages translated from Claudian's *Marriage of Honorius*, and from the *Metamorphoses of Ovid*.

Poliziano's second poem of importance, which indeed may historically be said to take precedence of *La Giostra*, was the so-called tragedy of *Orfeo*. The English version of this lyrical drama must be reserved for a separate study: yet it belongs to the subject of this, inasmuch as the *Orfeo* is a classical legend treated in a form already familiar to the Italian people. Nearly all the popular kinds of poetry of which specimens have been translated in this chapter will be found combined in its six short scenes.

THE ORFEO OF POLIZIANO.

THE *Orfeo* of Messer Angelo Poliziano ranks among the most important poems of the fifteenth century. It was composed at Mantua in the short space of two days, on the occasion of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga's visit to his native town in 1472. But, though so hastily put together, the *Orfeo* marks an epoch in the evolution of Italian poetry. It is the earliest example of a secular drama containing within the compass of its brief scenes the germ of the opera, the tragedy, and the pastoral play. In form it does not greatly differ from the "Sacre Rappresentazioni" of the fifteenth century, as those miracle-plays were handled by popular poets of the earlier Renaissance. But while the traditional octave stanza is used for the main movement of the piece, Poliziano has introduced episodes of *terza rima*, madrigals, a carnival song, a *ballata*, and, above all, choral passages which have in them the future melodrama of the musical Italian stage. The lyrical treatment of the fable, its capacity for brilliant and varied scenic effects, its combination of singing with action, and the whole artistic keeping of the piece, which never passes into genuine tragedy, but stays within the limits of romantic pathos, distinguish the *Orfeo* as a typical production of Italian genius. Thus, though little better than an improvisation, it combines the many forms of verse developed by the Tuscans at the close of the Middle Ages, and fixes the limits beyond which their dramatic poets, with a few exceptions, were not destined to advance. Nor was the choice of the fable without significance. Quitting the Bible stories and the Legends of Saints, which supplied the me-

diæval playwright with material, Poliziano selects a classic story: and this story might pass for an allegory of Italy, whose intellectual development the scholar-poet ruled. Orpheus is the power of poetry and art, softening stubborn nature, civilizing men, and prevailing over Hades for a season. He is the right hero of humanism, the genius of the Renaissance, the tutelary god of Italy, who thought she could resist the laws of fate by verse and elegant accomplishments. To press this kind of allegory is unwise; for at a certain moment it breaks in our hands. And yet in Eurydice the fancy might discover Freedom, the true spouse of poetry and art; Orfeo's last resolve too vividly depicts the vice of the Renaissance; and the Mænads are those barbarous armies destined to lay waste the plains of Italy, inebriate with wine and blood, obeying a new lord of life on whom the poet's harp exerts no charm. But a truce to this spinning of pedantic cobwebs. Let Mercury appear, and let the play begin.

THE FABLE OF ORPHEUS.

MERCURY announces the show.

Ho, silence! Listen! There was once a hind,
 Son of Apollo, Aristæus hight,
 Who loved with so untamed and fierce a mind
 Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus wight,
 That chasing her one day with will unkind
 He wrought her cruel death in love's despite;
 For, as she fled toward the mere hard by,
 A serpent stung her, and she had to die.
 Now Orpheus, singing, brought her back from hell,
 But could not keep the law the Fates ordain:
 Poor wretch, he backward turned and broke the spell;
 So that once more from him his love was ta'en.
 Therefore he would no more with women dwell,
 And in the end by women he was slain.

Enter a Shepherd, who says—

Nay, listen, friends! Fair auspices are given,
Since Mercury to earth hath come from heaven.

SCENE I.

Mopsus, an old shepherd.

Say, hast thou seen a calf of mine, all white
Save for a spot of black upon her front,
Two feet, one flank, and one knee ruddy-bright?

ARISTÆUS, a young shepherd.

Friend Mopsus, to the margin of this fount
No herds have come to drink since break of day;
Yet may'st thou hear them low on yonder mount.
Go, Thyrsis, search the upland lawn, I pray!
Thou Mopsus shalt with me the while abide;
For I would have thee listen to my lay. [Exit THYRSIS.
'Twas yester morn where trees yon cavern hide,
I saw a nymph more fair than Dian, who
Had a young lusty lover at her side:
But when that more than woman met my view,
The heart within my bosom leapt outright,
And straight the madness of wild Love I knew.
Since then, dear Mopsus, I have no delight;
But weep and weep: of food and drink I tire,
And without slumber pass the weary night.

MOPSUS.

Friend Aristæus, if this amorous fire
Thou dost not seek to quench as best may be,
Thy peace of soul will vanish in desire.
Thou know'st that love is no new thing to me:
I've proved how love grown old brings bitter pain:
Cure it at once, or hope no remedy;
For if thou find thee in Love's cruel chain,
Thy bees, thy blossoms will be out of mind,
Thy fields, thy vines, thy flocks, thy cotes, thy grain.

ARISTÆUS.

Mopsus, thou speakest to the deaf and blind :
 Waste not on me these wing'd words, I pray,
 Lest they be scattered to the inconstant wind.
 I love, and cannot wish to say love nay ;
 Nor seek to cure so charming a disease :
 They praise Love best who most against him say.
 Yet if thou fain wouldst give my heart some ease,
 Forth from thy wallet take thy pipe, and we
 Will sing awhile beneath the leafy trees ;
 For well my nymph is pleased with melody.

THE SONG.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay ;
 Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.
 The lovely nymph is deaf to my lament,
 Nor heeds the music of this rustic reed ;
 Wherefore my flocks and herds are ill content,
 Nor bathe their hoof where grows the water weed,
 Nor touch the tender herbage on the mead ;
 So sad, because their shepherd grieves, are they.
 Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay ;
 Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.
 The herds are sorry for their master's moan ;
 The nymph heeds not her lover though he die,
 The lovely nymph, whose heart is made of stone—
 Nay steel, nay adamant ! She still doth fly
 Far, far before me, when she sees me nigh,
 Even as a lamb flies from the wolf away.
 Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay ;
 Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.
 Nay, tell her, pipe of mine, how swift doth flee
 Beauty together with our years amain ;
 Tell her how time destroys all rarity,
 Nor youth once lost can be renewed again ;

Tell her to use the gifts that yet remain :
Roses and violets blossom not alway.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay ;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

Carry, ye winds, these sweet words to her ears,
Unto the ears of my loved nymph, and tell
How many tears I shed, what bitter tears !
Beg her to pity one who loves so well :
Say that my life is frail and mutable,
And melts like rime before the rising day.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay ;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

MORSUS.

Less sweet, methinks, the voice of waters falling
From cliffs that echo back their murmurous song ;
Less sweet the summer sound of breezes calling
Through pine-tree tops sonorous all day long,
Than are thy rhymes, the soul of grief entralling,
Thy rhymes o'er field and forest borne along :
If she but hear them, at thy feet she'll fawn.—
Lo, Thyrsis, hurrying homeward from the lawn !

[*Re-enter* THYRSIS.

ARISTÆUS.

What of the calf ? Say, hast thou seen her now ?

THYRSIS, *the cowherd.*

I have, and I'd as lief her throat were cut !
She almost ripped my bowels up, I vow,
Running amuck with horns well set to butt :
Nathless I've locked her in the stall below :
She's blown with grass, I tell you, saucy slut !

ARISTÆUS.

Now, prithee, let me hear what made you stay
So long upon the upland lawns away ?

THYRSIS.

Walking, I spied a gentle maiden there,
 Who plucked wild flowers upon the mountain-side:
 I scarcely think that Venus is more fair,
 Of sweeter grace, most modest in her pride:
 She speaks, she sings, with voice so soft and rare,
 That listening streams would backward roll their tide:
 Her face is snow and roses; gold her head;
 All, all alone she goes, white-raimented.

ARISTÆUS.

Stay, Mopsus! I must follow: for 'tis she
 Of whom I lately spoke. So, friend, farewell!

MOPSUS.

Hold, Aristæus, lest for her or thee
 Thy boldness be the cause of mischief fell!

ARISTÆUS.

Nay, death this day must be my destiny,
 Unless I try my fate and break the spell.
 Stay therefore, Mopsus, by the fountain stay!
 I'll follow her, meanwhile, yon mountain way.

[*Exit ARISTÆUS.*]

MOPSUS.

Thyrsis, what thinkest thou of thy loved lord?
 See'st thou that all his senses are distraught?
 Couldst thou not speak some seasonable word,
 Tell him what shame this idle love hath wrought?

THYRSIS.

Free speech and servitude but ill accord,
 Friend Mopsus, and the hind is folly-fraught
 Who rates his lord! He's wiser far than I.
 To tend these kine is all my mastery.

SCENE II.

ARISTÆUS, in pursuit of EURYDICE.

Flee not from me, maiden !

Lo, I am thy friend !

Dearer far than life I hold thee.

List, thou beauty-laden,

To these prayers attend :

Flee not, let my arms enfold thee !

Neither wolf nor bear will grasp thee :

That I am thy friend I've told thee :

Stay thy course then ; let me clasp thee !—

Since thou'rt deaf and wilt not heed me,

Since thou'rt still before me flying,

While I follow panting, dying,

Lend me wings, Love, wings to speed me !

[*Exit ARISTÆUS, pursuing EURYDICE.*]

SCENE III.

A DRYAD.

Sad news of lamentation and of pain,

Dear sisters, hath my voice to bear to you :

I scarcely dare to raise the dolorous strain.

Eurydice by yonder stream lies low ;

The flowers are fading round her stricken head,

And the complaining waters weep their woe.

The stranger soul from that fair house hath fled ;

And she, like privet pale, or white May-bloom

Untimely plucked, lies on the meadow, dead.

Hear then the cause of her disastrous doom !

A snake stole forth and stung her suddenly.

I am so burdened with this weight of gloom

That, lo, I bid you all come weep with me !

CHORUS OF DRYADES.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound !
For all heaven's light is spent.
Let rivers break their bound,
Swollen with tears outpoured from our lament !
Fell death hath ta'en their splendor from the skies :
The stars are sunk in gloom.
Stern death hath plucked the bloom
Of nymphs :—Eurydice down-trodden lies.
Weep, Love ! the woodland cries.
Weep, groves and founts ;
Ye craggy mounts ; you leafy dell,
Beneath whose boughs she fell,
Bend every branch in time with this sad sound.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound !
Ah, fortune pitiless ! Ah, cruel snake !
Ah, luckless doom of woes !
Like a cropped summer rose,
Or lily cut, she withers on the brake.
Her face, which once did make
Our age so bright
With beauty's light, is faint and pale ;
And the clear lamp doth fail,
Which shed pure splendor all the world around.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound !
Who e'er will sing so sweetly, now she's gone ?
Her gentle voice to hear,
The wild winds dared not stir ;
And now they breathe but sorrow, moan for moan :
So many joys are flown,
Such jocund days
Doth Death erase with her sweet eyes !
Bid earth's lament arise,
And make our dirge through heaven and sea rebound !

Let the wide air with our complaint resound !

A DRYAD.

'Tis surely Orpheus, who hath reached the hill,
With harp in hand, glad-eyed and light of heart !
He thinks that his dear love is living still.
My news will stab him with a sudden smart :
An unforeseen and unexpected blow
Wounds worst and stings the bosom's tenderest part.
Death hath disjoined the truest love, I know,
That nature yet to this low world revealed,
And quenched the flame in its most charming glow.
Go, sisters, hasten ye to yonder field,
Where on the sward lies slain Eurydice ;
Strew her with flowers and grasses ! I must yield
This man the measure of his misery.

[*Exeunt DRYADS. Enter ORPHEUS, singing.*

ORPHEUS, *sings.*

*Musa, triumphales titulos et gesta canamus
Herculis, et forti monstra subacta manu ;
Ut timida matri pressos ostenderit angues,
Intrepidusque fero riserit ore puer.*

A DRYAD.

Orpheus, I bring thee bitter news. Alas !
Thy nymph who was so beautiful, is slain !
Flying from Aristæus o'er the grass,
What time she reached yon stream that threads the plain,
A snake which lurked mid flowers where she did pass,
Pierced her fair foot with his envenomed bane :
So fierce, so potent was the sting, that she
Died in mid course. Ah, woe that this should be !
[ORPHEUS turns to go in silence.

MNESILLUS, *the satyr.*

Mark ye how sunk in woe
The poor wretch forth doth pass,
And may not answer, for his grief, one word ?
On some lone shore, unheard,
Far, far away, he'll go,

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And pour his heart forth to the winds, alas!
I'll follow and observe if he
Moves with his moan the hills to sympathy.

[*Follows ORPHEUS.*

ORPHEUS.

Let us lament, O lyre disconsolate!
Our wonted music is in tune no more.
Lament we while the heavens revolve, and let
The nightingale be conquered on Love's shore!
O heaven, O earth, O sea, O cruel fate!
How shall I bear a pang so passing sore?
Eurydice, my love! O life of mine!
On earth I will no more without thee pine!
I will go down unto the doors of Hell,
And see if mercy may be found below:
Perchance we shall reverse Fate's spoken spell
With tearful songs and words of honeyed woe:
Perchance will Death be pitiful; for well
With singing have we turned the streams that flow;
Moved stones, together hind and tiger drawn,
And made trees dance upon the forest lawn.

[*Passes from sight on his way to Hades.*

MNESILLUS.

The staff of Fate is strong
And will not lightly bend,
Nor yet the stubborn gates of steely Hell.
Nay, I can see full well
His life will not be long:
Those downward feet no more will earthward wend.
What marvel if they lose the light,
Who make blind Love their guide by day and night!

SCENE IV.

ORPHEUS, *at the gate of Hell.*

Pity, nay pity for a lover's moan!
Ye Powers of Hell, let pity reign in you!
To your dark regions led me Love alone:

Downward upon his wings of light I flew.
Hush, Cerberus! Howl not by Pluto's throne!
For when you hear my tale of misery, you,
Nor you alone, but all who here abide
In this blind world, will weep by Lethe's tide.
There is no need, ye Furies, thus to rage;
To dart those snakes that in your tresses twine:
Knew ye the cause of this my pilgrimage,
Ye would lie down and join your moans with mine.
Let this poor wretch but pass, who war doth wage
With heaven, the elements, the powers divine!
I beg for pity or for death. No more!
But open, ope Hell's adamantine door!

[ORPHEUS enters Hell.

PLUTO.

What man is he who with his golden lyre
Hath moved the gates that never move,
While the dead folk repeat his dirge of love?
The rolling stone no more doth tire
Swart Sisyphus on yonder hill;
And Tantalus with water slakes his fire:
The groans of mangled Tityos are still;
Ixion's wheel forgets to fly;
The Danaids their urns can fill:
I hear no more the tortured spirits cry;
But all find rest in that sweet harmony.

PROSERPINE.

Dear consort, since, compelled by love of thee,
I left the light of heaven serene,
And came to reign in Hell, a sombre queen,
The charm of tenderest sympathy
Hath never yet had power to turn
My stubborn heart, or draw forth tears from me.
Now with desire for yon sweet voice I yearn;
Nor is there aught so dear
As that delight. Nay, be not stern

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To this one prayer! Relax thy brows severe,
And rest awhile with me that song to hear!

[ORPHEUS stands before the throne.

ORPHEUS.

Ye rulers of the people lost in gloom,
Who see no more the jocund light of day!
Ye who inherit all things that the womb
Of Nature and the elements display!
Hear ye the grief that draws me to the tomb!
Love, cruel Love, hath led me on this way:
Not to chain Cerberus I hither come,
But to bring back my mistress to her home.

A serpent hidden among flowers and leaves
Stole my fair mistress—nay, my heart—from me:
Wherefore my wounded life forever grieves,
Nor can I stand against this agony.
Still, if some fragrance lingers yet and cleaves
Of your famed love unto your memory,
If of that ancient rape you think at all,
Give me back Eurydice!—On you I call.

All things ere long unto this bourn descend:
All mortal lives to you return at last:
Whate'er the moon hath circled, in the end
Must fade and perish in your empire vast:
Some sooner and some later hither wend;
Yet all upon this pathway shall have passed:
This of our footsteps is the final goal;
And then we dwell for aye in your control.

Therefore the nymph I love is left for you
When nature leads her deathward in due time:
But now you've cropped the tendrils as they grew,
The grapes unripe, while yet the sap did climb.
Who reaps the young blades wet with April dew,
Nor waits till summer hath o'erpassed her prime?
Give back, give back my hope one little day!—
Not for a gift, but for a loan I pray.

I pray not to you by the waves forlorn
Of marshy Styx or dismal Acheron,
By Chaos where the mighty world was born,
Or by the sounding flames of Phlegethon;
But by the fruit which charmed thee on that morn
When thou didst leave our world for this dread throne!
O queen! if thou reject this pleading breath,
I will no more return, but ask for death!

PROSERPINE.

Husband, I never guessed
That in our realm oppressed
Pity could find a home to dwell:
But now I know that mercy teems in Hell.
I see Death weep; her breast
Is shaken by those tears that faultless fell.
Let then thy laws severe for him be swayed
By love, by song, by the just prayers he prayed!

PLUTO.

She's thine, but at this price:
Bend not on her thine eyes,
Till mid the souls that live she stay.
See that thou turn not back upon the way!
Check all fond thoughts that rise!
Else will thy love be torn from thee away.
I am well pleased that song so rare as thine
The might of my dread sceptre should incline.

SCENE V.

ORPHEUS, sings.

*Ite triumphales circum mea tempora lauri.
Vicinus Eurydicen: reddita vita mihi est.
Hæc mea præcipue victoria digna corona.
Credimus? an lateri juncta puella meo?*

EURYDICE.

Ah me! Thy love too great
Hath lost not thee alone!

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I am torn from thee by strong Fate.
 No more I am thine own.
 In vain I stretch these arms. Back, back to Hell
 I'm drawn, I'm drawn. My Orpheus, fare thee well!

[EURYDICE *disappears*.

ORPHEUS.

Who hath laid laws on Love?
 Will pity not be given
 For one short look so full thereof?
 Since I am robbed of heaven,
 Since all my joy so great is turned to pain,
 I will go back and plead with Death again!

[TISIPHONE *blocks his way*.

TISIPHONE.

Nay, seek not back to turn!
 Vain is thy weeping, all thy words are vain.
 Eurydice may not complain
 Of aught but thee—albeit her grief is great.
 Vain are thy verses 'gainst the voice of Fate!
 How vain thy song! For Death is stern!
 Try not the backward path: thy feet refrain!
 The laws of the abyss are fixed and firm remain.

SCENE VI.

ORPHEUS.

What sorrow-laden song shall e'er be found
 To match the burden of my matchless woe?
 How shall I make the fount of tears abound,
 To weep apace with grief's unmeasured flow?
 Salt tears I'll waste upon the barren ground,
 So long as life delays me here below;
 And since my fate hath wrought me wrong so sore,
 I swear I'll never love a woman more!
 Henceforth I'll pluck the buds of opening spring,
 The bloom of youth when life is loveliest,
 Ere years have spoiled the beauty which they bring:

This love, I swear, is sweetest, softest, best !
Of female charms let no one speak or sing ;
Since she is slain who ruled within my breast.
He who would seek my converse, let him see
That ne'er he talk of woman's love to me !

How pitiful is he who changes mind

For woman ! for her love laments or grieves !
Who suffers her in chains his will to bind,
Or trusts her words lighter than withered leaves,
Her loving looks more treacherous than the wind !
A thousand times she veers ; to nothing cleaves ;
Follows who flies ; from him who follows, flees ;
And comes and goes like waves on stormy seas !

Hlgh Jove confirms the truth of what I said,

Who, caught and bound in love's delightful snare,
Enjoys in heaven his own bright Ganymed :
Phœbus on earth had Hyacinth the fair :
Hercules, conqueror of the world, was led
Captive to Hylas by this love so rare.
Advice for husbands ! Seek divorce, and fly
Far, far away from female company !

[*Enter a MÆNAD leading a train of BACCHANTES.*

A MÆNAD.

Ho ! Sisters ! Up ! Alive !

See him who doth our sex deride !

Hunt him to death, the slave !

Thou snatch the thyrsus ! Thou this oak-tree rive !

Cast down this doeskin and that hide !

We'll wreak our fury on the knave !

Yea, he shall feel our wrath, the knave !

He shall yield up his hide

Torn as woodmen pine-trees rive !

No power his life can save,

Since women he hath dared deride !

Ho ! To him, sisters ! Ho ! Alive !

[*ORPHEUS is chased off the scene and slain : the MÆNADS then return.*

A MÆNAD.

Ho! Bacchus! Ho! I yield thee thanks for this!
 Through all the woodland we the wretch have borne:
 So that each root is slaked with blood of his;
 Yea, limb from limb his body have we torn
 Through the wild forest with a fearful bliss:
 His gore hath bathed the earth by ash and thorn!—
 Go then! thy blame on lawful wedlock fling!
 Ho! Bacchus! Take the victim that we bring!

CHORUS OF MÆNADS.

Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
 Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!
 With ivy coronals, bunch and berry,
 Crown we our heads to worship thee!
 Thou hast bidden us to make merry
 Day and night with jollity!
 Drink then! Bacchus is here! Drink free,
 And hand ye the drinking-cup to me!
 Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
 Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!
 See, I have emptied my horn already:
 Stretch hither your beaker to me, I pray:
 Are the hills and the lawns where we roam unsteady?
 Or is it my brain that reels away?
 Let every one run to and fro through the hay,
 As ye see me run! Ho! after me!
 Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
 Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!
 Methinks I am dropping in swoon or slumber:
 Am I drunken or sober, yes or no?
 What are these weights my feet encumber?
 You too are tipsy, well I know!
 Let every one do as ye see me do,
 Let every one drink and quaff like me!
 Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
 Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Cry Bacchus ! Cry Bacchus ! Be blithe and merry,
Tossing wine down your throats away !
Let sleep then come and our gladness bury :
Drink you, and you, and you, while ye may !
Dancing is over for me to-day.
Let every one cry aloud Evohé !
Bacchus ! we all must follow thee !
Bacchus ! Bacchus ! Ohé ! Ohé !

Though an English translation can do little towards rendering the facile graces of Poliziano's style, that "roseate fluency" for which it has been praised by his Italian admirers, the main qualities of the *Orfeo* as a composition may be traced in this rough copy. Of dramatic power, of that mastery over the deeper springs of human nature which distinguished the first effort of the English muse in Marlowe's plays, there is but little. A certain adaptation of the language to the characters, as in the rudeness of Thyrsis when contrasted with the rustic elegance of Aristæus, a touch of simple feeling in Eurydice's lyrical outcry of farewell, a discrimination between the tender sympathy of Proserpine and Pluto's stern relenting, a spirited presentation of the Bacchanalian *furor* in the Mænads, an attempt to model the Satyr Mnesillus as apart from human nature and yet sympathetic to its anguish—these points constitute the chief dramatic features of the melodrama. Orpheus himself is a purely lyrical personage. Of character, he can scarcely be said to have anything marked ; and his part rises to its height precisely in that passage where the lyrist has to be displayed. Before the gates of Hades and the throne of Proserpine he sings, and his singing is the right outpouring of a poet's soul ; each octave resumes the theme of the last stanza with a swell of utterance, a *crescendo* of intonation that recalls the passionate and unpremeditated descant of a bird upon the boughs alone. To this true quality of music is added the persuasiveness of pleading. That the violin melody of

his incomparable song is lost must be reckoned a great misfortune. We have good reason to believe that the part of Orpheus was taken by Messer Baccio Ugolini, singing to the viol. Here too it may be mentioned that a *tondo* in monochrome, painted by Signorelli among the arabesques at Orvieto, shows Orpheus at the throne of Pluto, habited as a poet, with the laurel crown and playing on a violin of antique form. It would be interesting to know whether a rumor of the Mantuan pageant had reached the ears of the Cortonese painter.

If the whole of the *Orfeo* had been conceived and executed with the same artistic feeling as the chief act, it would have been a really fine poem independently of its historical interest. But we have only to turn the page and read the lament uttered for the loss of Eurydice in order to perceive Poliziano's incapacity for dealing with his hero in a situation of greater difficulty. The pathos which might have made us sympathize with Orpheus in his misery, the passion, approaching to madness, which might have justified his misogyny, are absent. It is difficult not to feel that in this climax of his anguish he was a poor creature, and that the Mænads served him right. Nothing illustrates the defect of real dramatic imagination better than this failure to dignify the catastrophe. Gifted with a fine lyrical inspiration, Poliziano seems to have already felt the Bacchic chorus which forms so brilliant a termination to his play, and to have forgotten his duty to the unfortunate Orpheus, whose sorrow for Eurydice is stultified and made unmeaning by the prosaic expression of a base resolve. It may indeed be said in general that the *Orfeo* is a good poem only where the situation is not so much dramatic as lyrical, and that its finest passage—the scene in Hades—was fortunately for its author one in which the dramatic motive had to be lyrically expressed. In this respect, as in many others, the *Orfeo* combines the faults and merits of the Italian attempts

at melo-tragedy. To break a butterfly upon the wheel is, however, no fit function of criticism ; and probably no one would have smiled more than the author of this improvisation at the thought of its being gravely dissected just four hundred years after the occasion it was meant to serve had long been given over to oblivion.*

* For the text of the *Orfeo* and for my method of dealing with it, see Appendix, vol. ii.

SIENA.

AFTER leaving the valley of the Arno at Empoli, the railway enters a country which rises into earthy hills of no great height, and spreads out at intervals into broad tracts of cultivated lowland. Geologically speaking, this portion of Tuscany consists of loam and sandy deposits, forming the basin between two mountain-ranges—the Apennines and the chalk hills of the western coast of Central Italy. Seen from the eminence of some old Tuscan turret, this champaign country has a stern and arid aspect. The earth is gray and dusty, the forms of hill and valley are austere and monotonous; even the vegetation seems to sympathize with the uninteresting soil from which it springs. A few spare olives cast their shadows on the lower slopes; here and there a copse of oakwood and acacia marks the course of some small rivulet; rye-fields, gray beneath the wind, clothe the hill-sides with scanty verdure. Every knoll is crowned with a village—brown roofs and white house-fronts clustered together on the edge of cliffs, and rising into the campanile or antique tower, which tells so many stories of bygone wars and decayed civilizations.

Beneath these villages stand groups of stone pines clearly visible upon the naked country, cypresses like spires beside the square white walls of convent or of villa, patches of dark foliage, showing where the ilex and the laurel and the myrtle hide thick tangles of rose-trees and jessamines in ancient gardens. Nothing can exceed the barren aspect of this country in midwinter: it resembles an exaggerated Sussex, without verdure to relieve the rolling lines of

down and hill and valley; beautiful yet by reason of its frequent villages and lucid air and infinitely subtle curves of mountain-ridges. But when spring comes, a light and beauty break upon this gloomy soil; the whole is covered with a delicate green veil of rising crops and fresh foliage, and the immense distances which may be seen from every height are blue with cloud-shadows or rosy in the light of sunset.

Of all the towns of Lower Tuscany, none is more celebrated than Siena. It stands in the very centre of the district which I have attempted to describe, crowning one of its most considerable heights, and commanding one of its most extensive plains. As a city, it is a typical representative of those numerous Italian towns whose origin is buried in remote antiquity, which have formed the seat of three civilizations, and which still maintain a vigorous vitality upon their ancient soil. Its site is Etruscan, its name is Roman, but the town itself owes all its interest and beauty to the artists and the statesmen and the warriors of the Middle Ages. A single glance at Siena from one of the slopes on the northern side will show how truly mediæval is its character. A city wall follows the outline of the hill, from which the towers of the cathedral and the palace, with other cupolas and red-brick campanili, spring; while cypresses and olive-gardens stretch downward to the plain. There is not a single Palladian façade or Renaissance portico to interrupt the unity of the effect. Over all, in the distance, rises Monte Amiata, melting imperceptibly into sky and plain.

The three most striking objects of interest in Siena maintain the character of mediæval individuality by which the town is marked. They are the public palace, the cathedral, and the house of St. Catherine. The civil life, the arts, and the religious tendencies of Italy during the ascendancy of mediæval ideas are strongly set before us here. High above every other building in the

town soars the straight brick tower of the Palazzo Pubblico, the house of the republic, the hearth of civil life within the State. It guards an irregular Gothic building in which the old government of Siena used to be assembled, but which has now for a long time been converted into prisons, courts of law, and show-rooms. Let us enter one chamber of the Palazzo—the Sala della Pace, where Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the greatest, perhaps, of Sienese painters, represented the evils of lawlessness and tyranny, and the benefits of peace and justice, in three noble allegories. They were executed early in the fourteenth century, in the age of allegories and symbolism, when poets and painters strove to personify in human shape all thoughts and sentiments. The first great fresco represents Peace—the peace of the Republic of Siena. Ambrogio has painted the twenty-four councillors who formed the government standing beneath the thrones of Concord, Justice, and Wisdom. From these controlling powers they stretch in a long double line to a seated figure, gigantic in size, and robed with the ensigns of baronial sovereignty. This figure is the State and Majesty of Siena.* Around him sit Peace, Fortitude, and Prudence, Temperance, Magnanimity, and Justice, inalienable assessors of a powerful and righteous lord. Faith, Hope, and Charity, the Christian virtues, float like angels in the air above.

* It is probable that the firm Ghibelline sympathies of the Sienese people for the empire were allegorized in this figure; so that the fresco represented by form and color what Dante had expressed in his treatise “*De Monarchia*.” Among the virtues who attend him, Peace distinguishes herself by rare and very remarkable beauty. She is dressed in white and crowned with olive; the folds of her drapery, clinging to the delicately modelled limbs beneath, irresistibly suggest a classic statue. So again does the monumental pose of her dignified, reclining, and yet languid figure. It seems not unreasonable to believe that Lorenzetti copied Peace from the antique Venus which belonged to the Sienese, and which in a fit of superstitious malice they subsequently destroyed and buried in Florentine soil.

Armed horsemen guard his throne, and captives show that he has laid his enemy beneath his feet. Thus the mediæval artist expressed, by painting, his theory of government. The rulers of the State are subordinate to the State itself; they stand between the State and the great animating principles of wisdom, justice, and concord, incarnating the one, and receiving inspiration from the others. The pagan qualities of prudence, magnanimity, and courage give stability and greatness to good government, while the spirit of Christianity must harmonize and rule the whole. Arms, too, are needful to maintain by force what right and law demand, and victory in a just quarrel proclaims the power and vigor of the commonwealth. On another wall Ambrogio has depicted the prosperous city of Siena, girt by battlements and moat, with tower and barbican and drawbridge, to insure its peace. Through the gates stream country people, bringing the produce of their farms into the town. The streets are crowded with men and women intent on business or pleasure; craftsmen at their trade, merchants with laden mules, a hawking-party, hunters scouring the plain, girls dancing, and children playing in the open square. A schoolmaster watching his class, together with the sculptured figures of Geometry, Astronomy, and Philosophy, remind us that education and science flourish under the dominion of well-balanced laws. The third fresco exhibits the reverse of this fair spectacle. Here Tyranny presides over a scene of anarchy and wrong. He is a hideous monster, compounded of all the bestial attributes which indicate force, treason, lechery, and fear. Avarice and Fraud and Cruelty and War and Fury sit around him. At his feet lies Justice, and above are the effigies of Nero, Caracalla, and like monsters of ill-regulated power. Not far from the castle of Tyranny we see the same town as in the other fresco; but its streets are filled with scenes of quarrel, theft, and bloodshed. Nor are these allegories merely fanciful. In the Middle Ages the same city might

more than once during one lifetime present in the vivid colors of reality the two contrasted pictures.*

Quitting the Palazzo, and threading narrow streets paved with brick and overshadowed with huge empty palaces, we reach the highest of the three hills on which Siena stands, and see before us the Duomo. This church is the most purely Gothic of all Italian cathedrals designed by national architects. Together with that of Orvieto, it stands to show what the unassisted genius of the Italians could produce, when under the empire of mediæval Christianity and before the advent of the neopagan spirit. It is built wholly of marble, and overlaid, inside and out, with florid ornaments of exquisite beauty. There are no flying buttresses, no pinnacles, no deep and fretted doorways, such as form the charm of French and English architecture; but, instead of this, the lines of parti-colored marbles, the scrolls and wreaths of foliage, the mosaics and the frescos which meet the eye in every direction, satisfy our sense of variety, producing most agreeable combinations of blending hues and harmoniously connected forms. The chief fault which offends against our Northern taste is the predominance of horizontal lines, both in the construction of the façade, and also in the internal decoration. This single fact sufficiently proves that the Italians had never seized the true idea of Gothic or aspiring architecture. But, allowing for this original defect, we feel that the Cathedral of Siena combines solemnity and splendor to a degree almost unrivalled. Its dome is another point in which the instinct of Italian architects has led

* Siena, of all Italian cities, was most subject to revolutions. Comines describes it as a city which "se gouverne plus follement que ville d'Italie." Varchi calls it "un guazzabuglio ed una confusione di repubbliche piuttosto che bene ordinata e instituta repubblica." See my *Age of the Despots*, Renaissance in Italy, part i., pp. 141, 554, for some account of the Siennese constitution, and of the feuds and reconciliations of the burghers.

them to adhere to the genius of their ancestral art rather than to follow the principles of Gothic design. The dome is Etruscan and Roman, native to the soil, and only by a kind of violence adapted to the character of pointed architecture. Yet the builders of Siena have shown what a glorious element of beauty might have been added to our Northern cathedrals had the idea of infinity which our ancestors expressed by long continuous lines, by complexities of interwoven aisles, and by multitudinous aspiring pinnacles, been carried out into vast spaces of aerial cupolas, completing and embracing and covering the whole like heaven. The Duomo, as it now stands, forms only part of a vast design. On entering we are amazed to hear that this church, which looks so large, from the beauty of its proportions, the intricacy of its ornaments, and the interlacing of its columns, is but the transept of the intended building lengthened a little, and surmounted by a cupola and campanile.* Yet such is the fact. Soon after its commencement a plague swept over Italy, nearly depopulated Siena, and reduced the town to penury for want of men. The cathedral, which, had it been accomplished, would have surpassed all Gothic churches south of the Alps, remained a ruin. A fragment of the nave still stands, enabling us to judge of its extent. The eastern wall joins what was to have been the transept, measuring the mighty space which would have been enclosed by marble vaults and columns delicately wrought. The sculpture on the eastern door shows with what magnificence the Siennese designed to ornament this portion of their temple; while the southern façade rears itself aloft above the town, like those high arches which testify to the past splendor of Glastonbury Abbey; but

* The present church was begun about 1229. In 1321 the burghers fancied it was too small for the fame and splendor of their city. So they decreed a new *ecclesia pulchra, magna, et magnifica*, for which the older but as yet unfinished building was to be the transept.

the sun streams through the broken windows, and the walls are encumbered with hovels and stables and the refuse of surrounding streets.

One most remarkable feature of the internal decoration is a line of heads of the Popes carried all round the church above the lower arches. Larger than life, white solemn faces, they lean, each from his separate niche, crowned with the triple tiara, and labelled with the name he bore. Their accumulated majesty brings the whole past history of the Church into the presence of its living members. A bishop walking up the nave of Siena must feel as a Roman felt among the waxen images of ancestors renowned in council or in war. Of course these portraits are imaginary for the most part; but the artists have contrived to vary their features and expression with great skill.

Not less peculiar to Siena is the pavement of the cathedral. It is inlaid with a kind of *tarsia* work in stone, setting forth a variety of pictures in simple but eminently effective mosaic. Some of these compositions are as old as the cathedral; others are the work of Beccafumi and his scholars. They represent, in the liberal spirit of mediæval Christianity, the history of the Church before the Incarnation. Hermes Trismegistus and the Sibyls meet us at the doorway. In the body of the Church we find the mighty deeds of the old Jewish heroes—of Moses and Samson and Joshua and Judith. Independently of the artistic beauty of the designs, of the skill with which men and horses are drawn in the most difficult attitudes, of the dignity of some single figures, and of the vigor and simplicity of the larger compositions, a special interest attaches to this pavement in connection with the twelfth canto of the *Purgatorio*. Dante cannot have trodden these stones and meditated upon their sculptured histories. Yet when we read how he journeyed through the plain of Purgatory with eyes intent upon its storied floor, how “*morti i morti, e i*

vivi parean vivi," how he saw "Nimrod at the foot of his great work, confounded, gazing at the people who were proud with him," we are irresistibly led to think of the Divine Comedy. The strong and simple outlines of the pavement correspond to the few words of the poet. Bending over these pictures and trying to learn their lesson, with the thought of Dante in our mind, the tones of an organ, singularly sweet and mellow, fall upon our ears, and we remember how he heard *Te Deum* sung within the gateway of repentance.

Continuing our walk, we descend the hill on which the Duomo stands, and reach a valley lying between the ancient city of Siena and a western eminence crowned by the Church of San Domenico. In this depression there has existed from old time a kind of suburb or separate district of the poorer people known by the name of the Contrada d' Oca. To the Sienese it has especial interest, for here is the birthplace of St. Catherine, the very house in which she lived, her father's workshop, and the chapel which has been erected in commemoration of her saintly life. Over the doorway is written in letters of gold "*Sposæ Christi Katherinæ domus.*" Inside they show the room she occupied, and the stone on which she placed her head to sleep: they keep her veil and staff and lantern and enamelled vinaigrette, the bag in which her alms were placed, the sackcloth that she wore beneath her dress, the crucifix from which she took the wounds of Christ. It is impossible to conceive, even after the lapse of several centuries, that any of these relics are fictitious. Every particular of her life was remembered and recorded with scrupulous attention by devoted followers. Her fame was universal throughout Italy before her death; and the house from which she went forth to preach and heal the sick and comfort plague-stricken wretches whom kith and kin had left alone to die was known and well beloved by all her citizens. From the moment of her death it became, and has

continued to be, the object of superstitious veneration to thousands. From the little *loggia* which runs along one portion of its exterior may be seen the campanile and the dome of the cathedral; on the other side rises the huge brick church of San Domenico, in which she spent the long ecstatic hours that won for her the title of Christ's spouse. In a chapel attached to the church she watched and prayed, fasting and wrestling with the fiends of a disordered fancy. There Christ appeared to her and gave her his own heart, there he administered to her the sacrament with his own hands, there she assumed the robe of poverty, and gave her Lord the silver cross and took from him the crown of thorns.

To some of us these legends may appear the flimsiest web of fiction; to others they may seem quite explicable by the laws of semi-morbid psychology; but to Catherine herself, her biographers, and her contemporaries, they were not so. The enthusiastic saint and reverent people believed firmly in these things; and after the lapse of five centuries her votaries still kiss the floor and steps on which she trod; still say, "This was the wall on which she leaned when Christ appeared; this was the corner where she clothed him, naked and shivering like a beggar-boy; here he sustained her with angels' food."

St. Catherine was one of twenty-five children born in wedlock to Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa, citizens of Siena. Her father exercised the trade of dyer and fuller. In the year of her birth, 1347, Siena reached the climax of its power and splendor. It was then that the plague of Boccaccio began to rage, which swept off 80,000 citizens, and interrupted the building of the great Duomo. In the midst of so large a family, and during these troubled times, Catherine grew almost unnoticed; but it was not long before she manifested her peculiar disposition. At six years old she already saw visions and longed for a monastic life;

about the same time she used to collect her childish companions together and preach to them. As she grew, her wishes became stronger; she refused the proposals which her parents made that she should marry, and so vexed them by her obstinacy that they imposed on her the most servile duties in their household. These she patiently fulfilled, pursuing at the same time her own vocation with unwearied ardor. She scarcely slept at all, and ate no food but vegetables and a little bread, scourged herself, wore sackcloth, and became emaciated, weak, and half delirious. At length the firmness of her character and the force of her hallucinations won the day. Her parents consented to her assuming the Dominican robe, and at the age of thirteen she entered the monastic life. From this moment till her death we see in her the ecstatic, the philanthropist, and the politician combined to a remarkable degree. For three whole years she never left her cell except to go to church, maintaining an almost unbroken silence. Yet when she returned to the world, convinced at last of having won by prayer and pain the favor of her Lord, it was to preach to infuriated mobs, to toil among men dying of the plague, to execute diplomatic negotiations, to harangue the republic of Florence, to correspond with queens, and to interpose between kings and popes. In the midst of this varied and distracting career she continued to see visions and to fast and scourge herself. The domestic virtues and the personal wants and wishes of a woman were annihilated in her; she lived for the Church, for the poor, and for Christ, whom she imagined to be constantly supporting her. At length she died, worn out by inward conflicts, by the tension of religious ecstasy, by want of food and sleep, and by the excitement of political life. To follow her in her public career is not my purpose. It is well known how, by the power of her eloquence and the ardor of her piety, she succeeded as a mediator between Florence and her native city, and between Florence

and the Pope; that she travelled to Avignon, and there induced Gregory XI. to put an end to the Babylonian captivity of the Church by returning to Rome; that she narrowly escaped political martyrdom during one of her embassies from Gregory to the Florentine republic; that she preached a crusade against the Turks; that her last days were clouded with sorrow for the schism which then rent the papacy; and that she aided by her dying words to keep Pope Urban on the papal throne. When we consider her private and spiritual life more narrowly, it may well move our amazement to think that the intricate politics of Central Italy, the counsels of licentious princes and ambitious popes, were in any measure guided and controlled by such a woman. Alone, and aided by nothing but a reputation for sanctity, she dared to tell the greatest men in Europe of their faults; she wrote in words of well-assured command, and they, demoralized, worldly, sceptical, or indifferent as they might be, were yet so bound by superstition that they could not treat with scorn the voice of an enthusiastic girl.

Absolute disinterestedness, the belief in her own spiritual mission, natural genius, and that vast power which then belonged to all energetic members of the monastic orders, enabled her to play this part. She had no advantages to begin with. The daughter of a tradesman overwhelmed with an almost fabulously numerous progeny, Catherine grew up uneducated. When her genius had attained maturity, she could not even read or write. Her biographer asserts that she learned to do so by a miracle. Anyhow, writing became a most potent instrument in her hands; and we possess several volumes of her epistles, as well as a treatise of mystical theology. To conquer self-love as the root of all evil, and to live wholly for others, was the cardinal axiom of her morality. She pressed this principle to its most rigorous conclusions in practice; never resting day or night from some kind of service,

and winning by her unselfish love the enthusiastic admiration of the people. In the same spirit of exalted self-annihilation, she longed for martyrdom, and courted death. There was not the smallest personal tie or after-thought of interest to restrain her in the course of action which she had marked out. Her personal influence seems to have been immense. When she began her career of public peacemaker and preacher in Siena, Raymond, her biographer, says that whole families devoted to *vendetta* were reconciled, and that civil strifes were quelled by her letters and addresses. He had seen more than a thousand people flock to hear her speak; the confessionals crowded with penitents, smitten by the force of her appeals; and multitudes, unable to catch the words which fell from her lips, sustained and animated by the light of holiness which beamed from her inspired countenance.* She was not beautiful, but her face so shone with love, and her eloquence was so pathetic in its tenderness, that none could hear or look on her without emotion. Her writings contain abundant proofs of this peculiar suavity. They are too sweet and unctuous in style to suit our modern taste. When dwelling on the mystic love of Christ, she cries, "O blood! O fire! O ineffable love!" When interceding before the Pope, she prays for "Pace, pace, pace, babbo mio dolce; pace, e non più guerra." Yet clear and simple thoughts, profound convictions, and stern moral teaching underlie her ecstatic exclamations. One prayer which she wrote, and which the people of Siena still use, expresses the prevailing spirit of her creed: "O Spirito Santo, o Deità eterna Cristo Amore! vieni nel mio cuore; per la tua potenza trailo a te, mio Dio, e concedemi carità con timore. Liberami, o Amore ineffabile, da ogni mal pensiero; riscaldami ed infiammami del tuo dolcis-

* The part played in Italy by preachers of repentance and peace is among the most characteristic features of Italian history. On this subject see the Appendix to my *Age of the Despots*, Renaissance in Italy, part i.

simo amore, sicchè ogni pena mi sembri leggiera. Santo mio Padre e dolce mio Signore, ora aiutami in ogni mio ministero. Cristo Amore! Cristo Amore!" The reiteration of the word "love" is most significant. It was the key-note of her whole theology, the mainspring of her life. In no merely figurative sense did she regard herself as the spouse of Christ, but dwelt upon the bliss, beyond all mortal happiness, which she enjoyed in supersensual communion with her Lord. It is easy to understand how such ideas might be, and have been, corrupted, when impressed on natures no less susceptible, but weaker and less gifted than St. Catherine's.

One incident related by Catherine in a letter to Raymond, her confessor and biographer, exhibits the peculiar character of her influence in the most striking light. Nicola Tuldo, a citizen of Perugia, had been condemned to death for treason in the flower of his age. So terribly did the man rebel against his sentence, that he cursed God, and refused the consolations of religion. Priests visited him in vain; his heart was shut and sealed by the despair of leaving life in all the vigor of its prime. Then Catherine came and spoke to him: "whence," she says, "he received such comfort that he confessed, and made me promise, by the love of God, to stand at the block beside him on the day of his execution." By a few words, by the tenderness of her manner, and by the charm which women have, she had already touched the heart no priest could soften, and no threat of death or judgment terrify into contrition. Nor was this strange. In our own days we have seen men open the secrets of their hearts to women, after repelling the advances of less touching sympathy. Youths, cold and cynical enough among their brethren, have stood subdued like little children before her who spoke to them of love and faith and penitence and hope. The world has not lost its ladies of the race of St. Catherine, beautiful and pure and holy,

who have suffered and sought peace with tears, and who have been appointed ministers of mercy for the worst and hardest of their fellow-men. Such saints possess an efficacy even in the imposition of their hands; many a devotee, like Tuldo, would more willingly greet death if his St. Catherine were by to smile and lay her hands upon his head, and cry, "Go forth, my servant, and fear not!" The chivalrous admiration for women mixes with religious awe to form the reverence which these saints inspire. Human and heavenly love, chaste and ecstatic, constitute the secret of their power. Catherine then subdued the spirit of Tuldo and led him to the altar, where he received the communion for the first time in his life. His only remaining fear was that he might not have strength to face death bravely. Therefore he prayed Catherine, "Stay with me, do not leave me; so it shall be well with me, and I shall die contented;" "and," says the saint, "he laid his head in the prison on my breast, and I said, 'Comfort thee, my brother, the block shall soon become thy marriage altar, the blood of Christ shall bathe thy sins away, and I will stand beside thee.'" When the hour came, she went and waited for him by the scaffold, meditating on Madonna and Catherine the saint of Alexandria. She laid her own neck on the block, and tried to picture to herself the pains and ecstasies of martyrdom. In her deep thought, time and place became annihilated; she forgot the eager crowd, and only prayed for Tuldo's soul and for herself. At length he came, walking "like a gentle lamb," and Catherine received him with the salutation of "sweet brother." She placed his head upon the block, and laid her hands upon him, and told him of the Lamb of God. The last words he uttered were the names of Jesus and of Catherine. Then the axe fell, and Catherine beheld his soul borne by angels into the regions of eternal love. When she recovered from her trance, she held his head within her hands; her dress was saturated with his blood,

which she could scarcely bear to wash away, so deeply did she triumph in the death of him whom she had saved. The words of St. Catherine herself deserve to be read. The simplicity, freedom from self-consciousness, and fervent faith in the reality of all she did and said and saw, which they exhibit, convince us of her entire sincerity.

The supernatural element in the life of St. Catherine may be explained partly by the mythologizing adoration of the people ready to find a miracle in every act of her they worshipped; partly by her own temperament and modes of life, which inclined her to ecstasy and fostered the faculty of seeing visions; partly by a pious misconception of the words of Christ and Bible phraseology.

To the first kind belong the wonders which are related of her early years, the story of the candle which burned her veil without injuring her person, and the miracles performed by her body after death. Many childish incidents were treasured up which, had her life proved different, would have been forgotten or have found their proper place among the catalogue of common things. Thus, on one occasion, after hearing of the hermits of the Thebaïd, she took it into her head to retire into the wilderness, and chose for her dwelling one of the caverns in the sandstone rock which abound in Siena near the quarter where her father lived. We merely see in this event a sign of her monastic disposition and a more than usual aptitude for realizing the ideas presented to her mind. But the old biographers relate how one celestial vision urged the childish hermit to forsake the world and another bade her return to the duties of her home.

To the second kind we may refer the frequent communings with Christ and with the fathers of the Church, together with the other visions to which she frequently laid claim; nor must we omit the stigmata which she believed she had received from Christ. Catherine was constitutionally inclined to hallucinations.

At the age of six, before it was probable that a child should have laid claim to spiritual gifts which she did not possess, she burst into loud weeping because her little brother rudely distracted her attention from the brilliant forms of saints and angels which she traced among the clouds. Almost all children of a vivid imagination are apt to transfer the objects of their fancy to the world without them. Goethe walked for hours in his enchanted gardens as a boy, and Alfieri tells us how he saw a company of angels in the choristers at Asti. Nor did St. Catherine omit any means of cultivating this faculty, and of preventing her splendid visions from fading away, as they almost always do, beneath the discipline of intellectual education and among the distractions of daily life. Believing simply in their heavenly origin, and receiving no secular training whatsoever, she walked surrounded by a spiritual world, environed, as her legend says, by angels. Her habits were calculated to foster this disposition. It is related that she took but little sleep, scarcely more than two hours at night, and that, too, on the bare ground; she ate nothing but vegetables and the sacred wafer of the host, entirely abjuring the use of wine and meat. This diet, combined with frequent fasts and severe ascetic discipline, depressed her physical forces, and her nervous system was thrown into a state of the highest exaltation. Thoughts became things, and ideas were projected from her vivid fancy upon the empty air around her. It was, therefore, no wonder that, after spending long hours in vigils and meditating always on the thought of Christ, she should have seemed to take the sacrament from his hands, to pace the chapel in communion with him, to meet him in the form of priest and beggar, to hear him speaking to her as a friend. Once, when the anguish of sin had plagued her with disturbing dreams, Christ came and gave her his own heart in exchange for hers. When lost in admiration before the cross at Pisa, she saw his five wounds

stream with blood—five crimson rays smote her, passed into her soul, and left their marks upon her hands and feet and side. The light of Christ's glory shone round about her; she partook of his martyrdom, and, awaking from her trance, she cried to Raymond, "Behold! I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus!"

This miracle had happened to St. Francis. It was regarded as the sign of fellowship with Christ—of worthiness to drink his cup and to be baptized with his baptism. We find the same idea, at least, in the old Latin hymns:

Fac me plagis vulnerari—
Cruce hæc inebriari—
Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem,
Et plagas recolere.

These are words from the *Stabat Mater*. Nor did St. Francis and St. Catherine do more than carry into the vividness of actual hallucination what had been the poetic rapture of many less ecstatic but not less ardent souls. They desired to be *literally* "crucified with Christ;" they were not satisfied with metaphor or sentiment, and it seemed to them that their Lord had really vouchsafed to them the yearning of their heart. We need not here raise the question whether the stigmata had ever been actually self-inflicted by delirious saint or hermit; it was not pretended that the wounds of St. Catherine were visible during her lifetime. After her death the faithful thought that they had seen them on her corpse, and they actually appeared in the relics of her hands and feet. The pious fraud, if fraud there must have been, should be ascribed, not to the saint herself, but to devotees and relic-mongers.* The order of St. Dominic would not

* It is not impossible that the stigmata may have been naturally produced in the person of St. Francis or St. Catherine. There are cases on record in which grave nervous disturbances have resulted in such modifications of the *flesh as may* have left the traces of wounds in scars and blisters.

be behind that of St. Francis. If the latter boasted of their stigmata, the former would be ready to perforate the hand or foot of their dead saint. Thus the ecstasies of genius or devotion are brought to earth and rendered vulgar by mistaken piety and the rivalry of sects. The people put the most material construction on all tropes and metaphors. Above the door of St. Catherine's chapel at Siena, for example, it is written :

Hæc tenet ara caput Catharinæ; corda requiris?

Hæc imo Christus pectore clausa tenet.

The frequent conversations which she held with St. Dominic and other patrons of the Church, and her supernatural marriage, must be referred to the same category. Strong faith and constant familiarity with one order of ideas, joined with a creative power of fancy and fostered by physical debility, produced these miraculous colloquies. Early in her career, her injured constitution, resenting the violence with which it had been forced to serve the ardors of her piety, troubled her with foul phantoms, haunting images of sin, and seductive whisperings, which clearly revealed a morbid condition of the nervous system. She was on the verge of insanity. The reality of her inspiration and her genius are proved by the force with which her human sympathies and moral dignity and intellectual vigor triumphed over these diseased hallucinations of the cloister and converted them into the instruments for effecting patriotic and philanthropic designs. There was nothing savoring of mean pretension or imposture in her claim to supernatural enlightenment. Whatever we may think of the wisdom of her public policy with regard to the Crusades and to the papal sovereignty, it is impossible to deny that a holy and high object possessed her from the earliest to the latest of her life; that she lived for ideas greater than self-aggrandizement or the saving of her soul—for the

greatest, perhaps, which her age presented to an earnest Catholic.

The abuses to which the indulgence of temperaments like that of St. Catherine must in many cases have given rise are obvious. Hysterical women and half-witted men, without possessing her abilities and understanding her objects, beheld unmeaning visions and dreamed childish dreams. Others won the reputation of sanctity by obstinate neglect of all the duties of life and of all the decencies of personal cleanliness. Every little town in Italy could show its saints like the Santa Fina of whom San Gimignano boasts—a girl who lay for seven years on a back-board till her mortified flesh clung to the wood; or the San Bartolo, who, for hideous leprosy, received the title of the Job of Tuscany. Children were encouraged in blasphemous pretensions to the special power of Heaven, and the nerves of weak women were shaken by revelations in which they only half believed. We have ample evidence to prove how the trade of miracles is still carried on, and how in the France of our days, when intellectual vigor has been separated from old forms of faith, such vision-mongering undermines morality, encourages ignorance, and saps the force of individuals. But St. Catherine must not be confounded with those sickly shams and make-believes. Her enthusiasms were real; they were proper to her age; they inspired her with unrivalled self-devotion and unwearied energy; they connected her with the political and social movements of her country.

Many of the supernatural events in St. Catherine's life were founded on a too literal acceptance of Biblical metaphors. The Canticles, perhaps, inspired her with the belief in a mystical marriage. An enigmatical sentence of St. Paul's suggested the stigmata. When the saint bestowed her garment upon Christ in the form of a beggar and gave him the silver cross of her rosary, she was but realizing his own words: "Inasmuch as ye

shall do it unto the least of these little ones, ye shall do it unto me." Charity, according to her conception, consisted in giving to Christ. He had first taught this duty; he would make it the test of all duty at the last day. Catherine was charitable for the love of Christ. She thought less of the beggar than of her Lord. How could she do otherwise than see the aureole about his forehead and hear the voice of him who had declared, "Behold, I am with you, even to the end of the world." Those were times of childlike simplicity, when the eye of love was still unclouded, when men could see beyond the phantoms of this world, and, stripping off the accidents of matter, gaze upon the spiritual and eternal truths that lie beneath. Heaven lay around them in that infancy of faith; nor did they greatly differ from the saints and founders of the Church—from Paul, who saw the vision of the Lord; or Magdalen, who cried, "He is risen!" An age accustomed to veil thought in symbols easily reversed the process and discerned essential qualities beneath the common or indifferent objects of the outer world. It was, therefore, Christ whom St. Christopher carried in the shape of a child; Christ whom Fra Angelico's Dominicans received in pilgrim's garb at their convent gate; Christ with whom, under a leper's loathsome form, the flower of Spanish chivalry was said to have shared his couch.

In all her miracles it will be noticed that St. Catherine showed no originality. Her namesake of Alexandria had already been proclaimed the spouse of Christ. St. Francis had already received the stigmata; her other visions were such as had been granted to all fervent mystics; they were the growth of current religious ideas and unbounded faith. It is not as an innovator in religious ecstasy, or as the creator of a new kind of spiritual poetry, that we admire St. Catherine. Her inner life was simply the foundation of her character; her visions were a source of strength to her in times of trial, or the expression of a more than usually ex-

alted mood; but the means by which she moved the hearts of men belonged to that which she possessed in common with all leaders of mankind—enthusiasm, eloquence, the charm of a gracious nature, and the will to do what she designed. She founded no religious order, like St. Francis or St. Dominic, her predecessors, or Loyola, her successor. Her work was a woman's work—to make peace, to succor the afflicted, to strengthen the Church, to purify the hearts of those around her, not to rule or organize. When she died she left behind her a memory of love more than of power, the fragrance of an unselfish and gentle life, the echo of sweet and earnest words. Her place is in the heart of the humble; children belong to her sisterhood, and the poor crowd her shrine on festivals.

Catherine died at Rome, on the 29th of April, 1380, in her thirty-third year, surrounded by the most faithful of her friends and followers; but it was not until 1461 that she received the last honor of canonization from the hands of Pius II. (Æneas Sylvius), her countryman. Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini was, perhaps, the most remarkable man that Siena has produced. Like St. Catherine, he was one of a large family; twenty of his brothers and sisters perished in a plague. The licentiousness of his early life, the astuteness of his intellect, and the worldliness of his aims contrast with the singularly disinterested character of the saint on whom he conferred the highest honors of the Church. But he accomplished by diplomacy and skill what Catherine had begun. If she was instrumental in restoring the Popes to Rome, he ended the schism which had clouded her last days. She had preached a crusade; he lived to assemble the armies of Christendom against the Turks, and died at Ancona, while it was still uncertain whether the authority and enthusiasm of a pope could steady the wavering counsels and vacillating wills of kings and princes. The Middle Ages were still vital in St. Catherine; Pius

II. belonged by taste and genius to the new period of Renaissance. The hundreds of the poorer Sienese who kneel before St. Catherine's shrine prove that her memory is still alive in the hearts of her fellow-citizens; while the gorgeous library of the cathedral, painted by the hand of Pinturicchio, the sumptuous palace and the Loggia del Papa, designed by Bernardo Rossellino and Antonio Federighi, record the pride and splendor of the greatest of the Piccolomini. But, honorable as it was for Pius to fill so high a place in the annals of his city; to have left it as a poor adventurer; to return to it, first as bishop, then as pope; to have a chamber in its mother church adorned with the pictured history of his achievements for a monument and a triumph of Renaissance architecture dedicated to his family (*gentilibus suis*), yet we cannot but feel that the better part remains with St. Catherine, whose prayer is still whispered by children on their mother's knee, and whose relics are kissed daily by the simple and devout.

Some of the chief Italian painters have represented the incidents of St. Catherine's life and of her mystical experience. All the pathos and beauty which we admire in Sodoma's St. Sebastian at Florence are surpassed by his fresco of St. Catherine receiving the stigmata. This is one of several subjects painted by him on the walls of her chapel in San Domenico. The tender unction, the sweetness, the languor, and the grace which he commanded with such admirable mastery are all combined in the figure of the saint falling exhausted into the arms of her attendant nuns. Soft undulating lines rule the composition; yet dignity of attitude and feature prevails over mere loveliness. Another of Siena's greatest masters—Beccafumi—has treated the same subject with less pictorial skill and dramatic effect, but with an earnestness and simplicity that are very touching. Colorists always liked to introduce the sweeping lines of her white robes into their compositions. Fra Bartolommeo, who showed con-

summate art by tempering the masses of white drapery with mellow tones of brown or amber, painted one splendid picture of the marriage of St. Catherine, and another in which he represents her prostrate in adoration before the mystery of the Trinity. His gentle and devout soul sympathized with the spirit of the saint. The fervor of her devotion belonged to him more truly than the leonine power which he unsuccessfully attempted to express in his large figure of St. Mark. Other artists have painted the two Catherines together—the princess of Alexandria, crowned and robed in purple, bearing her palm of martyrdom, beside the nun of Siena, holding in her hand the lantern with which she went about by night among the sick. Ambrogio Borgognone makes them stand one on each side of Madonna's throne, while the infant Christ upon her lap extends his hands to both in token of their marriage.

The traditional type of countenance which may be traced in all these pictures is not without a real foundation. Not only does there exist at Siena, in the Church of San Domenico, a contemporary portrait of St. Catherine, but her head also, which was embalmed immediately after death, is still preserved. The skin of the face is fair and white, like parchment, and the features have more the air of sleep than death. We find in them the breadth and squareness of general outline, and the long, even eyebrows which give peculiar calm to the expression of her pictures. This relic is shown publicly once a year on the 6th of May. That is the Festa of the Saint, when a procession of priests and acolytes, and pious people holding tapers, and little girls dressed out in white, carry a splendid silver image of their patroness about the city. Banners and crosses and censers go in front; then follows the shrine beneath a canopy; roses and leaves of box are scattered on the path. The whole Contrada d' Oca is decked out with such finery as the people can muster—red cloths hung from the win-

dows, branches and garlands strewn about the door-steps, with brackets for torches on the walls, and altars erected in the middle of the street. Troops of country-folk and towns-people and priests go in and out to visit the cell of St. Catherine. The upper and the lower chapel, built upon its site, and the hall of the *confraternità*, blaze with lighted tapers. The faithful, full of wonder, kneel or stand about the "santi luoghi," marvelling at the relics and repeating to one another the miracles of the saint. The same bustle pervades the Church of San Domenico. Masses are being said at one or other chapel all the morning, while women in their flapping Tuscan hats crowd round the silver image of St. Catherine and say their prayers with a continual undercurrent of responses to the nasal voice of priest or choir. Others gain entrance to the chapel of the saint and kneel before her altar. There, in the blaze of sunlight and of tapers, far away behind the gloss and gilding of a tawdry shrine, is seen the pale, white face which spoke and suffered so much years ago. The contrast of its rigid stillness and half-concealed corruption with the noise and life and light outside is very touching. Even so, the remnant of a dead idea still stirs the souls of thousands, and many ages may roll by before time and oblivion assert their inevitable sway.

PERUGIA.

PERUGIA is the empress of hill-set Italian cities. Southward from her high-built battlements and church-towers the eye can sweep a circuit of the Apennines unrivalled in its width. From cloudlike Radicofani, above Siena in the west, to snow-capped Monte Catria, beneath whose summit Dante spent those saddest months of solitude in 1313, the mountains curve continuously in lines of austere dignity and tempered sweetness. Assisi, Spoleto, Todi, Trevi, crown lesser heights within the range of vision. Here and there the glimpse of distant rivers lights a silver spark upon the plain. Those hills conceal Lake Trasymene; and there lies Orvieto, and Ancona there: while at our feet the Umbrian champaign, breaking away into the valley of the Tiber, spreads in all the largeness of majestically converging mountain-slopes. This is a landscape which can never lose its charm. Whether it be purple golden summer, or winter with sad tints of russet woods and faintly rosy snows, or spring attired in tenderest green of new-fledged trees and budding flowers, the air is always pure and light and finely tempered here. City gates, sombre as their own antiquity, frame vistas of the laughing fields. Terraces, flanked on either side by jutting masonry, cut clear vignettes of olive-hoary slopes, with cypress-shadowed farms in hollows of the hills. Each coign or point of vantage carries a bastion or tower of Etruscan, Roman, mediæval architecture, tracing the limits of the town upon its mountain plateau. Everywhere art and nature lie side by side in amity beneath a sky so pure and delicate that from its limpid depth the spirit seems to drink new life. What

air-tints of lilac, orange, and pale amethyst are shed upon those vast ethereal hills and undulating plains! What wandering cloud-shadows sail across this sea of olives and of vines, with here and there a fleece of vapor or a column of blue smoke from charcoal-burners on the mountain flank! To southward, far away beyond those hills, is felt the presence of eternal Rome, not seen, but clearly indicated by the hurrying of a hundred streams that swell the Tiber.

In the neighborhood of the town itself there is plenty to attract the student of antiquities or art or history. He may trace the walls of the Etruscan city, and explore the vaults where the dust of the *Volumnii* lies coffered in sarcophagi and urns. Mild faces of grave deities lean from the living tufa above those narrow alcoves, where the chisel-marks are still fresh, and where the vigilant lamps still hang suspended from the roof by leaden chains. Or, in the museum, he may read on bass-reliefs and vases how gloomy and morose were the superstitions of those obscure forerunners of majestic Rome. The piazza offers one of the most perfect Gothic façades, in its *Palazzo Pubblico*, to be found in Italy. The flight of marble steps is guarded from above by the bronze griffin of Perugia and the Baglioni, with the bronze lion of the Guelf faction, to which the town was ever faithful. Upon their marble brackets they ramp in all the lean ferocity of feudal heraldry, and from their claws hang down the chains wrested in old warfare from some barricaded gateway of Siena. Below is the fountain, on the many-sided curves of which Giovanni Pisano sculptured, in quaint statuettes and bass-reliefs, all the learning of the Middle Ages, from the Bible history down to fables of *Æsop* and allegories of the several months. Facing the same piazza is the *Sala del Cambio*, a mediæval Bourse, with its tribunal for the settlement of mercantile disputes, and its exquisite carved wood-work and frescos, the masterpiece of Peruginò's school. Hard

by is the university, once crowded with native and foreign students, where the eloquence of Greek Demetrius in the first dawn of the Renaissance withdrew the gallants of Perugia—those slim youths with shocks of nut-brown hair beneath their tiny red caps, whose comely legs, encased in tight-fitting hose of two different colors, look so strange to modern eyes upon the canvas of Signorelli—from their dice and wine-cups, and amours and daggers, to grave studies in the lore of Greece and Rome.

This piazza, the scene of all the bloodiest tragedies in Perugian annals, is closed at the north end by the cathedral, with the open pulpit in its wall from which St. Bernardino of Siena preached peace in vain. The citizens wept to hear his words: a bonfire of vanities was lighted on the flags beside Pisano's fountain: foe kissed foe: and the same cowl of St. Francis was set in token of repentance on heads that long had schemed destruction, each for each. But a few days passed, and the penitents returned to cut each other's throat. Often and often have those steps of the Duomo run with blood of Baglioni, Oddi, Arcipreti, and La Staffa. Once the whole church had to be washed with wine and blessed anew before the rites of Christianity could be resumed in its desecrated aisles. It was here that within the space of two days, in 1500, the catafalque was raised for the murdered Astorre, and for his traitorous cousin Grifonetto Baglioni. Here, too, if more ancient tradition does not err, were stretched the corpses of twenty-seven members of the same great house at the end of one of their grim combats.

No Italian city illustrates more forcibly than Perugia the violent contrasts of the earlier Renaissance. This is, perhaps, its most essential characteristic—that which constitutes its chief æsthetic interest. To many travellers the name of Perugia suggests at once the painter who, more than any other, gave expression to devout emotions in consummate works of pietistic art.

They remember how Raphael, when a boy, with Pinturicchio, Lo Spagna, and Adone Doni, in the workshop of Pietro Perugino, learned the secret of that style to which he gave sublimity and freedom in his Madonnas di San Sisto, di Foligno, and del Cardellino. But the students of mediæval history in detail know Perugia far better as the lion's lair of one of the most ferocious broods of heroic ruffians Italy can boast. To them the name of Perugia suggests at once the great house of the Baglioni, who drenched Umbria with blood, and gave the broad fields of Assisi to the wolf, and who through six successive generations bred captains for the armies of Venice, Florence, Naples, and the Church.* That the trade of Perugino in religious pictures should have been carried on in the city which shared the factions of the Baglioni—that Raphael should have been painting *Pietas* while Astorre and Simonetto were being murdered by the beautiful young Grifonetto—is a paradox of the purest water in the history of civilization.

The art of Perugino implied a large number of devout and wealthy patrons, a public not only capable of comprehending him, but also eager to restrict his great powers within the limits of purely devotional delineation. The feuds and passions of the Baglioni, on the other hand, implied a society in which egregious crimes only needed success to be accounted glorious, where force, cruelty, and cynical craft reigned supreme, and where the animal instincts attained gigantic proportions in the persons of splendid young athletic despots. Even the names of these Baglioni—Astorre, Lavinia, Zenobia, Atalanta, Troilo, Ercole, Annibale, Ascanio, Penelope, Orazio, and so forth—clash with the sweet mild

* Most of the references in this essay are made to the Perugian chronicles of Graziani, Matarazzo, Bontempi, and Froliere, in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*, vol. xvi. parts 1 and 2. Ariodante Fabretti's *Biografie dei Capitani Venturieri dell' Umbria* supply some details.

forms of Perugino, whose very executioners are candidates for Paradise, and kill their martyrs with compunction.

In Italy of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries such contradictions subsisted in the same place and under the conditions of a common culture, because there was no limit to the development of personality. Character was far more absolute then than now. The force of the modern world, working in the men of those times like powerful wine, as yet displayed itself only as a spirit of freedom and expansion and revolt. The strait laces of mediæval Christianity were loosened. The coercive action of public opinion had not yet made itself dominant. That was an age of adolescence, in which men were and dared to be *themselves* for good or evil. Hypocrisy, except for some solid, well-defined, selfish purpose, was unknown: the deference to established canons of decorum which constitutes more than half of our so-called morality, would have been scarcely intelligible to an Italian. The outlines of individuality were therefore strongly accentuated. Life itself was dramatic in its incidents and motives, its catastrophes and contrasts. These conditions, eminently favorable to the growth of arts and the pursuit of science, were no less conducive to the hypertrophy of passions, and to the full development of ferocious and inhuman personalities. Every man did what seemed good in his own eyes. Far less restrained than we are by the verdict of his neighbors, but bound by faith more blind and fiercer superstitions, he displayed the contradictions of his character in picturesque chiaroscuro. What he could was the limit set on what he would. Therefore, considering the infinite varieties of human temperaments, it was not merely possible, but natural, for Pietro Perugino and Gianpaolo Baglioni to be inhabitants at the same time of the self-same city, and for the pious Atalanta to mourn the bloodshed and the treason of her Achillean son, the young and terrible Grifone. Here, in a word, in Perugia, beneath

the fierce blaze of the Renaissance, were brought into splendid contrast both the martial violence and the religious sentiment of mediævalism, raised for a moment to the elevation of fine art.

Some of Perugino's qualities can be studied better in Perugia than elsewhere. Of his purely religious pictures—altar-pieces of Madonna and Saints, martyrdoms of St. Sebastian, Crucifixions, Ascensions, Annunciations, and Depositions from the Cross—fine specimens are exhibited in nearly all the galleries of Europe. A large number of his works and of those of his scholars may be seen assembled in the Pinacoteca of Perugia. Yet the student of his pietistic style finds little here of novelty to notice. It is in the Sala del Cambio that we gain a really new conception of his faculty. Upon the decoration of that little hall he concentrated all his powers of invention. The frescos of the Transfiguration and the Nativity, which face the great door, are the triumphs of his devotional manner. On other panels of the chamber he has portrayed the philosophers of Greece and Rome, the kings and generals of antiquity, the prophets and the sibyls who announced Christ's advent. The roof is covered with arabesques of delicate design and dainty execution—labyrinths of fanciful improvisation, in which flowers and foliage and human forms are woven into an harmonious framework for the medallions of the seven planets. The woodwork with which the hall is lined below the frescos shows to what a point of perfection the art of *intarsia-tura* had been carried in his school. All these decorative masterpieces are the product of one ingenuous style. Uninfluenced by the Roman frescos imitated by Raphael in his Loggie of the Vatican, they breathe the spirit of the earlier Renaissance, which created for itself free forms of grace and loveliness without a pattern, divining by its innate sense of beauty what the classic artists had achieved. Take for an example the medallion of the planet Jupiter. The king of gods and men, hoary-headed and mild-eyed,

is seated in his chariot drawn by eagles: before him kneels Gany-
mede, a fair-haired, exquisite, slim page, with floating mantle and
ribbons fluttering round his tight hose and jerkin. Such were the
cup-bearers of Galeazzo Sforza and Gianpaolo Baglioni. Then
compare this fresco with the Jupiter in mosaic upon the cupola
of the Chigi chapel in S. Maria del Popolo at Rome. A new age
of experience had passed over Raphael between his execution of
Perugino's design in the one and his conception of the other.
He had seen the marbles of the Vatican, and had heard of Plato
in the interval: the simple graces of the earlier Renaissance were
no longer enough for him; but he must realize the thought of
classic myths in his new manner. In the same way we may com-
pare this Transfiguration with Raphael's last picture, these sibyls
with those of S. Maria della Pace, these sages with the School of
Athens, these warriors with the Battle of Maxentius. What is
characteristic of the full-grown Raphael is his universal compre-
hension, his royal faculty for representing past and present, near
and distant, things the most diverse, by forms ideal and yet dis-
tinctive. Each phase of the world's history and of human activ-
ity receives from him appropriate and elevated expression. What
is characteristic of the frescos in the Sala del Cambio, and in-
deed of the whole manner of Perugino, is that all subjects, sacred
or secular, allegorical or real, are conceived in the same spirit of
restrained and well-bred piety. There is no attempt at historical
propriety or dramatic realism. Grave, ascetic, melancholy faces
of saints are put on bodies of kings, generals, sages, sibyls, and
deities alike. The same ribbons and studied draperies clothe and
connect all. The same conventional attitudes of meditative grace-
fulness are repeated in each group. Yet the whole effect, if some-
what feeble and insipid, is harmonious and thoughtful. We see
that each part has proceeded from the same mind, in the same
mood, and that the master's mind was no common one, the mood

itself was noble. Good taste is everywhere apparent: the work throughout is a masterpiece of refined fancy.

To Perugino the representative imagination was of less importance than a certain delicate and adequately ideal mode of feeling and conceiving. The consequent charm of his style is that everything is thought out and rendered visible in one decorous key. The worst that can be said of it is that its suavity inclines to mawkishness, and that its quietism borders upon sleepiness. We find it difficult not to accuse him of affectation. At the same time we are forced to allow that what he did, and what he refrained from doing, was determined by a purpose. A fresco of the Adoration of the Shepherds, and a picture of St. Sebastian in the Pinacoteca, where the archer on the right hand is drawn in a natural attitude with force and truth, show well enough what Perugino could do when he chose.

The best way of explaining his conventionality, in which the supreme power of a master is always verging on the facile trick of a mannerist, is to suppose that the people of Perugia and the Umbrian highlands imposed on him this narrow mode of treatment. We may presume that he was always receiving orders for pictures to be executed in his well-known manner. Celestial insipidity in art was the fashion in that Umbria which the Baglioni and the popes laid waste from time to time with fire and sword.*

Therefore the painter, who had made his reputation by placing

* It will not be forgotten by students of Italian history that Umbria was the cradle of the *Battuti*, or Flagellants, who overspread Italy in the fourteenth century, and to whose devotion were due the *Laudi*, or popular hymns of the religious confraternities, which in course of time produced the *Sacre Rappresentazioni* of fifteenth century Florentine literature. Umbria, and especially Perugia and Assisi, seem to have been inventive in piety between 1200 and 1400.

devout young faces upon twisted necks, with a background of limpid twilight and calm landscape, was forced by the fervor of his patrons, and his own desire for money, to perpetuate pious prettinesses long after he had ceased to feel them. It is just this widespread popularity of a master unrivalled in one line of devotional sentimentalism which makes the contrast between Perugino and the Baglioni family so striking.

The Baglioni first came into notice during the wars they carried on with the Oddi of Perugia in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.* This was one of those duels to the death, like that of the Visconti with the Torrensi of Milan, on which the fate of so many Italian cities in the Middle Ages hung. The nobles fought; the townsfolk assisted like a Greek chorus, sharing the passions of the actors, but contributing little to the catastrophe. The piazza was the theatre on which the tragedy was played. In this contest the Baglioni proved the stronger, and began to sway the State of Perugia after the irregular fashion of Italian despots. They had no legal right over the city, no hereditary magistracy, no title of princely authority.† The Church was reckoned the supreme administrator of the Perugian commonwealth. But in

* The Baglioni persecuted their rivals with persistent fury to the very last. Matarazzo tells how Morgante Baglioni gave a death-wound to his nephew, the young Carlo de li Oddi, in 1501: "Dielli una ferita nella formosa faccia: el quale era in aspetto vago e bello giovane d'anni 23 o 24, *al quale uscivano e bionde tresse sotto la bella armadura.*" The same night his kinsman Pompeo was murdered in prison with this last lament upon his lips: "O infelice casa degli Oddi, quale avete tanta fama di conduttieri, capitane, cavaliere, speron d'oro, protonotarie, e abbate; et in uno solo tempo avete homine quarantadue; e oggie, per me quale son ultimo, se asconde el nome de la magnifica e famosa casa degli Oddi, che mai al mondo non sarà piu nominata" (p. 175).

† The Baglioni were lords of Spello, Bettona, Montalera, and other Umbrian burghs, but never of Perugia. Perugia had a civic constitution similar to that of Florence and other Guelf towns under the protection of the Holy See. The power of the eminent house was based only on wealth and prestige.

reality no man could set foot on the Umbrian plain without permission from the Baglioni. They elected the officers of state. The lives and goods of the citizens were at their discretion. When a papal legate showed his face, they made the town too hot to hold him. One of Innocent VIII.'s nephews had been murdered by them.* Another cardinal had shut himself up in a box, and sneaked on mule-back like a bale of merchandise through the gates to escape their fury. It was in vain that from time to time the people rose against them, massacring Pandolfo Baglioni on the public square in 1393, and joining with Ridolfo and Braccio of the dominant house to assassinate another Pandolfo with his son Niccolo in 1460. The more they were cut down, the more they flourished. The wealth they derived from their lordships in the duchy of Spoleto and the Umbrian hill-cities, and the treasures they accumulated in the service of the Italian republics, made them omnipotent in their native town. There they built tall houses on the site which Paul III. chose afterwards for his *castello*, and which is now an open place above the Porta San Carlo. From the balconies and turrets of these palaces, swarming with their *bravi*, they surveyed the splendid land that felt their force — a land which, even in midsummer, from sunrise to sunset keeps the light of day upon its up-turned face. And from this eyrie they issued forth to prey upon the plain, or to take their lust of love or blood within the city streets. The Baglioni spent but short time in the amusements of peace. From father to son they were warriors, and we have records of few Italian houses, except, perhaps, the Malatesti of Rimini, who equalled them in hardihood and fierceness. Especially were they noted for the remorseless *vendette* which they carried on among

* See Matarazzo, p. 38. It is here that he relates the covert threat addressed by Guido Baglioni to Alexander VI., who was seeking to inveigle him into his clutches.

themselves, cousin tracking cousin to death with the ferocity and craft of sleuth-hounds. Had they restrained these fratricidal passions, they might, perhaps, by following some common policy, like that of the Medici in Florence or the Bentivogli in Bologna, have successfully resisted the papal authority and secured dynastic sovereignty.

It is not until 1495 that the history of the Baglioni becomes dramatic, possibly because till then they lacked the pen of Matarazzo.* But from this year forward to their final extinction, every detail of their doings has a picturesque and awful interest. Domestic furies, like the revel described by Cassandra above the palace of Mycenæ, seem to take possession of the fated house; and the doom which has fallen on them is worked out with pitiless exactitude to the last generation. In 1495 the heads of the Casa Baglioni were two brothers, Guido and Ridolfo, who had a numerous progeny of heroic sons. From Guido sprang Astorre, Adriano—called for his great strength Morgante †—Gismondo, Marcantonio, and Gentile. Ridolfo owned Troilo, Gianpaolo, and Simonetto. The first glimpse we get of these young athletes in Matarazzo's chronicle is on the occasion of a sudden assault upon Perugia made by the Oddi and the exiles of their faction in September, 1495. The foes of the Baglioni entered the gates and began breaking the iron chains, *serragli*, which barred the streets against advancing cavalry. None of the noble house were on the alert except young Simonetto, a lad of eighteen, fierce and cruel,

* His chronicle is a masterpiece of naive, unstudied narrative. Few documents are so important for the student of the sixteenth century in Italy. Whether it be really the work of Matarazzo or Maturanzio, the distinguished humanist, is more than doubtful. The writer seems to me as yet unspoiled by classic studies and the pedantries of imitation.

† This name, it may be incidentally mentioned, proves the wide-spread popularity of Pulci's poem, the *Morgante Maggiore*.

who had not yet begun to shave his chin.* In spite of all dissuasion, he rushed forth alone, bareheaded, in his shirt, with a sword in his right hand and a buckler on his arm, and fought against a squadron. There at the barrier of the piazza he kept his foes at bay, smiting men-at-arms to the ground with the sweep of his tremendous sword, and receiving on his gentle body twenty-two cruel wounds. While thus at fearful odds, the noble Astorre mounted his charger and joined him. Upon his helmet flashed the falcon of the Baglioni with the dragon's tail that swept behind. Bidding Simonetto tend his wounds, he in his turn held the square.

Listen to Matarazzo's description of the scene; it is as good as any piece of the *Morte d'Arthur*: "According to the report of one who told me what he had seen with his own eyes, never did anvil take so many blows as he upon his person and his steed; and they all kept striking at his lordship in such crowds that the one prevented the other. And so many lances, partisans, and cross-bow quarries, and other weapons made upon his body a most mighty din, that above every other noise and shout was heard the thud of those great strokes. But he, like one who had the mastery of war, set his charger where the press was thickest, jostling now one and now another; so that he ever kept at least ten men of his foes stretched on the ground beneath his horse's hoofs; which horse was a most fierce beast, and gave his enemies what trouble he best could. And now that gentle lord was all fordone with sweat and toil, he and his charger; and so weary were they that scarcely could they any longer breathe."

* "Era costui al presente di anne 18 o 19; ancora non se radeva barba; e mostrava tanta forza e tanto ardire, e era tanto adatto nel fatto d'arme, che era gran maraveglia; e iostrava cum tanta gentilezza e gagliardia, che homo del mondo non l'aria mai creso; et aria dato con la punta de la lancia in nel fondo d'uno biechiere da la mattina a la sera," etc. (p. 50).

Soon after the Baglioni mustered in force. One by one their heroes rushed from the palaces. The enemy were driven back with slaughter; and a war ensued which made the fair land between Assisi and Perugia a wilderness for many months. It must not be forgotten that at the time of these great feats of Simonetto and Astorre young Raphael was painting in the studio of Perugino. What the whole city witnessed with astonishment and admiration, he, the keenly sensitive artist-boy, treasured in his memory. Therefore in the St. George of the Louvre, and in the mounted horseman trampling upon Heliodorus in the Stanze of the Vatican, victorious Astorre lives forever, immortalized in all his splendor by the painter's art. The grinning griffin on the helmet, the resistless frown upon the forehead of the beardless knight, the terrible right arm, and the ferocious steed—all are there as Raphael saw and wrote them on his brain. One characteristic of the Baglioni, as might be plentifully illustrated from their annalist, was their eminent beauty, which inspired beholders with an enthusiasm and a love they were far from deserving by their virtues. It is this, in combination with their personal heroism, which gives a peculiarly dramatic interest to their doings, and makes the chronicle of Matarazzo more fascinating than a novel. He seems unable to write about them without using the language of an adoring lover.

In the affair of 1495 the Baglioni were at amity among themselves. When they next appear upon the scene, they are engaged in deadly feud. Cousin has set his hand to the throat of cousin, and the two heroes of the piazza are destined to be slain by foulest treachery of their own kin. It must be premised that besides the sons of Guido and Ridolfo already named, the great house counted among its most distinguished members a young Grifone, or Grifonetto, the son of Grifone and Atalanta Baglioni. Both his father and grandfather had died violent deaths in the prime

of their youth: Galeotto, the father of Atalanta, by poison, and Grifone by the knife at Ponte Ricciolo in 1477. Atalanta was left a young widow with one only son, this Grifonetto, whom Matarazzo calls "un altro Ganimede," and who combined the wealth of two chief branches of the Baglioni. In 1500, when the events about to be related took place, he was quite a youth. Brave, rich, handsome, and married to a young wife, Zenobia Sforza, he was the admiration of Perugia. He and his wife loved each other dearly, and how, indeed, could it be otherwise, since "l'uno e l'altro sembravano doi angioli di Paradiso?" At the same time he had fallen into the hands of bad and desperate counsellors. A bastard of the house, Filippo da Braccio, his half-uncle, was always at his side, instructing him not only in the accomplishments of chivalry, but also in wild ways that brought his name into disrepute. Another of his familiars was Carlo Barciglia Baglioni, an unquiet spirit, who longed for more power than his poverty and comparative obscurity allowed. With them associated Jeronimo della Penna, a veritable ruffian, contaminated from his earliest youth with every form of lust and violence, and capable of any crime.* These three companions, instigated partly by the lord of Camerino and partly by their own cupidity, conceived a scheme for massacring the families of Guido and Ridolfo at one blow. As a consequence of this wholesale murder, Perugia would be at their discretion. Seeing of what use Grifonetto by his wealth and name might be to them, they did all they could to persuade him to join their conjuration. It would

* Matarazzo's description of the ruffians who surrounded Grifonetto (pp. 104, 105, 113) would suit Webster's *Flamineo* or *Bosola*. In one place he likens Filippo to *Achitophel* and Grifonetto to *Absalom*. Villano Villani, quoted by Fabretti (vol. iii. p. 125), relates the street adventures of this clique. It is a curious picture of the pranks of an Italian princeling in the fifteenth century.

appear that the bait first offered him was the sovereignty of the city, but that he was at last gained over by being made to believe that his wife, Zenobia, had carried on an intrigue with Gianpaolo Baglioni. The dissolute morals of the family gave plausibility to an infernal trick which worked upon the jealousy of Grifonetto. Thirsting for revenge, he consented to the scheme. The conspirators were further fortified by the accession of Jeronimo della Staffa, and three members of the house of Corgna. It is noticeable that out of the whole number only two—Bernardo da Corgna and Filippo da Braccio—were above the age of thirty. Of the rest, few had reached twenty-five. At so early an age were the men of those times adepts in violence and treason. The execution of the plot was fixed for the wedding festivities of Astorre Baglioni with Lavinia, the daughter of Giovanni Colonna and Giustina Orsini. At that time the whole Baglioni family were to be assembled in Perugia, with the single exception of Marcantonio, who was taking baths at Naples for his health. It was known that the members of the noble house, nearly all of them *condottieri* by trade, and eminent for their great strength and skill in arms, took few precautions for their safety. They occupied several houses close together between the Porta San Carlo and the Porta Eburnea, set no regular guard over their sleeping-chambers, and trusted to their personal bravery and to the fidelity of their attendants.* It was thought that they might be assassinated in their beds. The wedding festivities began upon the 28th of July, and great is the particularity with which Matarazzo describes the doings of each successive day—processions, jousts, triumphal arches, banquets, balls, and pag-

* Jacobo Antiquari, the secretary of Lodovico Sforza, in a curious letter, which gives an account of the massacre, says that he had often reproved the Baglioni for "sleeping in their beds without any guard or watch, so that they might easily be overcome by enemies."

cants. The night of the 14th of August was finally set apart for the consummation of *el gran tradimento*: it is thus that Matarazzo always alludes to the crime of Grifonetto, with a solemnity of reiteration that is most impressive. A heavy stone let fall into the court-yard of Guido Baglioni's palace was to be the signal: each conspirator was then to run to the sleeping-chamber of his appointed prey. Two of the principals and fifteen *bravi* were told off to each victim: rams and crow-bars were prepared to force the doors if needful. All happened as had been anticipated. The crash of the falling stone was heard. The conspirators rushed to the scene of operations. Astorre, who was sleeping in the house of his traitorous cousin Grifonetto, was slain in the arms of his young bride, crying, as he vainly struggled, "Misero Astorre che more come poltrone!" Simonetto, who lay that night with a lad called Paolo he greatly loved, flew to arms, exclaiming to his brother, "Non dubitare Gismondo, mio fratello!" He, too, was soon despatched, together with his bedfellow. Filippo da Braccio, after killing him, tore from a great wound in his side the still quivering heart, into which he drove his teeth with savage fury. Old Guido died groaning "Ora è gionto il ponto mio;" and Gismondo's throat was cut while he lay holding back his face that he might be spared the sight of his own massacre. The corpses of Astorre and Simonetto were stripped and thrown out naked into the streets. Men gathered round and marvelled to see such heroic forms, with faces so proud and fierce even in death. In especial the foreign students likened them to ancient Romans.* But on their fingers were rings, and these the ruffians of the place would fain have hacked off with their knives. From

* "Quelli che li vidino, e maxime li forastiere studiante assomigliavano el magnifico Messer Astorre così morto ad un antico Romano, perchè prima era unanissimo; tanto sua figura era degna e magna," etc. This is a touch exquisitely illustrative of the Renaissance enthusiasm for classic culture.

this indignity the noble limbs were spared ; then the dead Bagli-
oni were hurriedly consigned to an unhonored tomb. Meanwhile
the rest of the intended victims managed to escape. Gianpaolo,
assailed by Grifonetto and Gianfrancesco della Corgna, took ref-
uge with his squire and bedfellow, Maraglia, upon a staircase lead-
ing from his room. While the squire held the passage with his
pike against the foe, Gianpaolo effected his flight over neighbor-
ing house-roofs. He crept into the attic of some foreign stu-
dents, who, trembling with terror, gave him food and shelter, clad
him in a scholar's gown, and helped him to fly in this disguise
from the gates at dawn. He then joined his brother Troilo at
Marsciano, whence he returned without delay to punish the trai-
tors. At the same time Grifonetto's mother, Atalanta, taking
with her his wife, Zenobia, and the two young sons of Gianpaolo,
Malatesta and Orazio, afterwards so celebrated in Italian history
for their great feats of arms and their crimes, fled to her coun-
try-house at Landona. Grifonetto in vain sought to see her there.
She drove him from her presence with curses for the treason and
the fratricide that he had planned. It is very characteristic of
these wild natures, framed of fierce instincts and discordant pas-
sions, that his mother's curse weighed like lead upon the unfortu-
nate young man. Next day, when Gianpaolo returned to try the
luck of arms, Grifonetto, deserted by the companions of his crime
and paralyzed by the sense of his guilt, went out alone to meet
him on the public place. The semi-failure of their scheme had
terrified the conspirators : the horrors of that night of blood un-
nerved them. All had fled except the next victim of the feud.
Putting his sword to the youth's throat, Gianpaolo looked into
his eyes and said, " Art thou here, Grifonetto ? Go with God's
peace : I will not slay thee, nor plunge my hand in my own
blood, as thou hast done in thine." Then he turned and left the
lad to be hacked in pieces by his guard. The untranslatable

words which Matarazzo uses to describe his death are touching from the strong impression they convey of Grifonetto's goodness: "Qui ebbe sua signoria sopra sua nobile persona tante ferite che suoi membra leggiadre stese in terra." * None but Greeks felt the charm of personal beauty thus. But while Grifonetto was breathing out his life upon the pavement of the piazza, his mother, Atalanta, and his wife, Zenobia, came to greet him through the awe-struck city. As they approached, all men fell aside and slunk away before their grief. None would seem to have had a share in Grifonetto's murder. Then Atalanta knelt by her dying son, and ceased from wailing, and prayed and exhorted him to pardon those who had caused his death. It appears that Grifonetto was too weak to speak, but that he made a signal of assent, and received his mother's blessing at the last: "E allora porse el nobil giovenetto la dextra mano a la sua giovenile matre strengendo de sua matre la bianca mano; e poi incontinente spirò l'anima dal formoso corpo, e passò cum infinite benedizioni de sua matre in cambio de la maledictione che prima li aveva date." † Here, again, the style of Matarazzo, tender and full of tears, conveys the keenest sense of the pathos of beauty and of youth in death and sorrow. He has forgotten *el gran tradimento*. He only remembers how comely Grifonetto was, how noble, how frank and spirited, how strong in war, how sprightly in his pleasures and his loves. And he sees the still young mother, delicate and nobly born, leaning over the athletic body of her bleeding son. This scene, which is, perhaps, a genuine instance of what we may call

* Here his lordship received upon his noble person so many wounds that he stretched his graceful limbs upon the earth.

† And then the noble stripling stretched his right hand to his youthful mother, pressing the white hand of his mother; and afterwards forthwith he breathed his soul forth from his beauteous body, and died with numberless blessings of his mother instead of the curses she had given him before.

the Neohellenism of the Renaissance, finds its parallel in the *Phænissæ* of Euripides. Jocasta and Antigone have gone forth to the battle-field and found the brothers Polynices and Eteocles drenched in blood :

From his chest
Heaving a heavy breath, King Eteocles heard
His mother, and stretched forth a cold, damp hand
On hers, and nothing said, but with his eyes
Spake to her by his tears, showing kind thoughts
In symbols.

It was Atalanta, we may remember, who commissioned Raphael to paint the so-called Borghese Entombment. Did she, perhaps, feel, as she withdrew from the piazza, soaking with young Grifonetto's blood,* that she, too, had some portion in the sorrow of that mother who had wept for Christ? The memory of the dreadful morning must have remained with her through life, and long communion with our Lady of Sorrows may have sanctified the grief that had so bitter and so shameful a root of sin.

After the death of Grifonetto and the flight of the conspirators, Gianpaolo took possession of Perugia. All who were suspected of complicity in the treason were massacred upon the piazza and in the cathedral. At the expense of more than a hundred murders, the chief of the Baglioni found himself master of the city on the 17th of July. First he caused the cathedral to be washed with wine and reconsecrated. Then he decorated the Palazzo with the heads of the traitors and with their portraits in fresco, painted hanging head downwards, as was the fashion in Italy.† Next he established himself in what remained of the palaces of his kindred, hanging the saloons with black, and arraying

* See Matarazzo, p. 134, for this detail.

† See Varchi (ed. Lemonnier, 1857), vol. ii. p. 265, vol. iii. pp. 224, 652, and Corio (Venice, 1554), p. 326, for instances of *dipinti per traditori*.

his retainers in the deepest mourning. Sad, indeed, was now the aspect of Perugia. Helpless and comparatively uninterested, the citizens had been spectators of these bloody broils. They were now bound to share the desolation of their masters. Matarazzo's description of the mournful palace and the silent town, and of the return of Marcantonio from Naples, presents a picture striking for its vividness.* In the true style of the Baglioni, Marcantonio sought to vent his sorrow not so much in tears as by new violence. He prepared and lighted torches, meaning to burn the whole quarter of St. Angelo; and from this design he was with difficulty dissuaded by his brother. To such mad freaks of rage and passion were the inhabitants of a mediæval town in Italy exposed! They make us understand the *ordinanze di giustizia*, by which to be a noble was a crime in Florence.

From this time forward the whole history of the Baglioni family is one of crime and bloodshed. A curse had fallen on the house, and to the last of its members the penalty was paid. Gianpaolo himself acquired the highest reputation throughout Italy for his courage and sagacity both as a general and a governor.† It was he who held Julius II. at his discretion in 1506, and was sneered at by Machiavelli for not consummating his enormities by killing the warlike Pope.‡ He again, after joining the diet

* Page 142: "Pareva ogni cosa oscura e lacrimosa: tutte loro servitore piangevano; et le camere de lo resto de li magnifici Baglioni, e sale, e ogni cosa erano tutte intorno cum pagnie negre. E per la città non era più alcuno che sonasse nè cantasse; e poco si rideva," etc.

† See Froliere, p. 437, for a very curious account of his character.

‡ Fabretti (vol. iii. pp. 193-292, and notes) discusses this circumstance in detail. Machiavelli's critique runs thus (Discorsi, lib. i. cap. 27): "Nè si poteva credere che si fosse astenuto o per bontà, o per coscienza che lo ritenesse; perchè in un petto d'un uomo facinoroso, che si teneva la sorella, ch'aveva morti i cugini e i nipoti per regnare, non poteva scendere alcuno pietoso

of La Magione against Cesare Borgia, escaped by his acumen the massacre of Sinigaglia, which overthrew the other conspirators. But his name was no less famous for unbridled lust and deeds of violence. He boasted that his son Constantino was a true Baglioni, since he was his sister's child. He once told Machiavelli that he had it in his mind to murder four citizens of Perugia, his enemies. He looked calmly on while his kinsmen Eusebio and Taddeo Baglioni, who had been accused of treason, were hewn to pieces by his guard. His wife, Ippolita de' Conti, was poniarded on her Roman farm; on hearing the news, he ordered a festival in which he was engaged to proceed with redoubled merriment.* At last the time came for him to die by fraud and violence. Leo X., anxious to remove so powerful a rival from Perugia, lured him in 1520 to Rome under the false protection of a papal safe-conduct. After a short imprisonment he had him beheaded in the Castle of St. Angelo. It was thought that Gentile, his first cousin, sometime Bishop of Orvieto, but afterwards the father of two sons in wedlock with Giulia Vitelli—such was the discipline of the Church at this epoch—had contributed to the capture of Gianpaolo, and had exulted in his execution.† If so, he paid dear for his treachery; for Orazio Baglioni, the second son of Gianpaolo and captain of the Church under Clement VII., had him murdered in 1527, together with his two nephews Fileno and Annibale.‡ This Orazio was one of the most blood-thirsty of the whole brood. Not satisfied with the assassination

rispetto: ma si conchiuse che gli uomini non sanno essere onorevolmente tristi, o perfettamente buoni," etc.

* See Fabretti, vol. iii. p. 230. He is an authority for the details of Gianpaolo's life. The circumstance alluded to above justifies the terrible opening scene in Shelley's tragedy, *The Cenci*.

† Fabretti, vol. iii. p. 230, vol. iv. p. 10.

‡ See Varchi, *Storie Florentine*, vol. i. p. 224.

of Gentile, he stabbed Galeotto, the son of Grifonetto, with his own hand in the same year.* Afterwards he died in the kingdom of Naples while leading the Black Bands in the disastrous war which followed the sack of Rome. He left no son. Malatesta, his elder brother, became one of the most celebrated generals of the age, holding the batons of the Venetian and Florentine republics, and managing to maintain his ascendancy in Perugia in spite of the persistent opposition of successive popes. But his name is best known in history for one of the greatest public crimes—a crime which must be ranked with that of Marshal Bazaine. Intrusted with the defence of Florence during the siege of 1530, he sold the city to his enemy, Pope Clement, receiving for the price of this infamy certain privileges and immunities which fortified his hold upon Perugia for a season. All Italy was ringing with the great deeds of the Florentines, who for the sake of their liberty transformed themselves from merchants into soldiers, and withstood the united powers of pope and emperor alone. Meanwhile Malatesta, whose trade was war, and who was being largely paid for his services by the beleaguered city, contrived by means of diplomatic procrastination, secret communication with the enemy, and all the arts that could intimidate an army of recruits, to push affairs to a point at which Florence was forced to capitulate without inflicting the last desperate glorious blow she longed to deal her enemies. The universal voice of Italy condemned him. When Matteo Dandolo, the Doge of Venice, heard what he had done, he cried before the Pregadi in conclave, “He has sold that people and that city, and the blood of those poor citizens ounce by ounce, and has donned the cap of the biggest traitor in the world.”† Consumed with shame, corroded by an infamous disease, and mistrustful of Clement, to whom he had sold his honor, Malatesta retired to Perugia, and

* See Varchi, *Storie Florentine*, vol. i. p. 224. † Fabretti, vol. iv. p. 206.

died in 1531. He left one son, Ridolfo, who was unable to maintain himself in the lordship of his native city. After killing the papal legate, Cinzio Filonardi, in 1534, he was dislodged four years afterwards, when Paul III. took final possession of the place as an appanage of the Church, razed the houses of the Baglioni to the ground, and built upon their site the Rocca Paolina. This fortress bore an inscription: "Ad coercendam Perusinorum audaciam." The city was given over to the rapacity of the abominable Pier Luigi Farnese, and so bad was this tyranny of priests and bastards, that, strange to say, the Perugians regretted the troublous times of the Baglioni. Malatesta in dying had exclaimed, "Help me, if you can; since after me you will be set to draw the cart like oxen." Froliere, relating the speech, adds, "And this has been fulfilled to the last letter, for all have borne not only the yoke but the burden and the goad." Ridolfo Baglioni and his cousin Braccio, the eldest son of Grifonetto, were both captains of Florence. The one died in battle in 1554, the other in 1559. Thus ended the illustrious family. They are now represented by descendants from females, and by *contadini* who preserve their name and boast a pedigree of which they have no records.

The history of the Baglioni needs no commentary. They were not worse than other Italian nobles who by their passions and their parties destroyed the peace of the city they infested. It is with an odd mixture of admiration and discontent that the chroniclers of Perugia allude to their ascendancy. Matarazzo, who certainly cannot be accused of hostility to the great house, describes the miseries of his country under their bad government in piteous terms: * "As I wish not to swerve from the pure truth, I say that from the day the Oddi were expelled, our city went from bad to worse. All the young men followed the trade of

* Pages 102, 103.

arms. Their lives were disorderly ; and every day divers excesses were indulged, and the city had lost all reason and justice. Every man administered right unto himself, *propria autoritate et manu regia*. Meanwhile the Pope sent many legates, if so be the city could be brought to order ; but all who came returned in dread of being hewn in pieces ; for they threatened to throw some from the windows of the palace, so that no cardinal or other legate durst approach Perugia, unless he were a friend of the Baglioni. And the city was brought to such misery that the most wretched men were most prized ; and those who had slain two or three men walked as they listed through the palace, and went with sword or poniard to speak to the *podestà* and other magistrates. Moreover, every man of worth was downtrodden by *bravi* whom the nobles favored ; nor could a citizen call his property his own. The nobles robbed first one and then another of goods and land. All offices were sold or else suppressed ; and taxes and extortions were so grievous that every one cried out. And if a man were in prison for his head, he had no reason to fear death, provided he had some interest with a noble." Yet the same Matarazzo in another place finds it in his heart to say :* " Though the city suffered great pains for these nobles, yet the illustrious house of Baglioni brought her honor throughout Italy, by reason of the great dignity and splendor of that house, and of their pomp and name. Wherefore through them our city was often set above the rest, and notably above the commonwealths of Florence and Siena." Pride feels no pain. The gratified vanity of the Perugian burgher, proud to see his town preferred before its neighbors, blinds the annalist to all the violence and villany of the magnificent Casa Baglioni. So strong was the *esprit de ville* which through successive centuries and amid all vicissitudes of politics divided the Italians against themselves, and proved an insuperable obstacle to unity.

* Page 139.

After reading the chronicle of Matarazzo at Perugia through one winter day, I left the inn and walked at sunset to the blood-bedabbled cathedral square; for still those steps and pavements to my strained imagination seemed reeking with the outpoured blood of Baglioni; and on the ragged stonework of San Lorenzo red patches slanted from the dying day. Then by one of those strange freaks of the brain to which we are all subject, for a moment I lost sight of untidy Gothic façades and gaunt, unfinished church walls; and as I walked, I was in the Close of Salisbury on a perfumed summer afternoon. The drowsy scent of lime-flowers and mignonette, the cawing of elm-cradled rooks, the hum of bees above, the velvet touch of smooth-shorn grass, and the breathless shadow of motionless green boughs made up one potent and absorbing mood of the charmed senses. Far overhead soared the calm gray spire into the infinite air, and the perfection of accomplished beauty slept beneath in those long lines of nave and choir and transepts. It was but a momentary dream, a thought that burned itself upon a fancy overtaxed by passionate images. Once more the puppet-scene of the brain was shifted; once more I saw the bleak, bare flags of the Perugian piazza, the forlorn front of the Duomo, the bronze griffin, and Pisano's fountain, with here and there a flake of that tumultuous fire which the Italian sunset sheds. Who shall adequately compare the two pictures? Which shall we prefer, the Close of Salisbury, with its sleepy bells and cushioned ease of immemorial deans, or this poor threadbare passion of Perugia, where every stone is stained with blood, and where genius in painters and scholars and prophets and ecstatic lovers has throbbed itself away to nothingness? It would be foolish to seek an answer to this question, idle to institute a comparison, for instance, between those tall young men with their broad winter cloaks who remind me of Grifonetto, and the vergers pottering in search of shillings along the gravel-paths of Salis-

bury. It is more rational, perhaps, to reflect of what strange stuff our souls are made in this age of the world, when æsthetic pleasures, full, genuine, and satisfying, can be communicated alike by Perugia with its fascination of a dead, irrevocable, dramatic past, and Salisbury, which finds the artistic climax of its English comfort in the "Angel of the house." From Matarazzo, smitten with a Greek love for the beautiful Grifonetto, to Mr. Patmore, is a wide step.

POPULAR SONGS OF TUSCANY.

It is a noticeable fact about the popular songs of Tuscany that they are almost exclusively devoted to love. The Italians in general have no ballad literature resembling that of our border or that of Spain. The tragic histories of their noble families, the great deeds of their national heroes, and the sufferings of their country during centuries of warfare, have left but few traces in their rustic poetry. It is true that some districts are less utterly barren than others in these records of the past. The Sicilian people's poetry, for example, preserves a memory of the famous Vespers; and one or two terrible stories of domestic tragedy, like the tale of Rosmunda in *La Donna Lombarda*, the romance of the Baronessa di Carini, and the so-called Caso di Sciacca, may still be heard upon the lips of the people. But these exceptions are insignificant in comparison with the vast mass of songs which deal with love; and I cannot find that Tuscany, where the language of this minstrelsy is purest, and where the artistic instincts of the race are strongest, has anything at all approaching to our ballads.* Though the Tuscan *contadini* are always singing, it rarely happens that

* This sentence requires some qualification. In his *Poesia Popolare Italiana*, 1878, Professor D'Ancona prints a Pisan, a Venetian, and two Lombard versions of our border ballad "Where hae ye been, Lord Randal, my son," so close in general type and minor details to the English, German, Swedish, and Finnish versions of this Volkslied as to suggest a very ancient community of origin. It remains as yet, however, an isolated fact in the history of Italian popular poetry.

The plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago.

On the contrary, we may be sure, when we hear their voices ringing through the olive-groves or *macchi*, that they are chanting

Some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day—
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ;

or else, since their melodies are by no means uniformly sad, some ditty of the joyousness of spring-time or the ecstasy of love.

This defect of anything corresponding to our ballads of *Chevy Chase*, or *Sir Patrick Spens*, or *Gil Morrice*, in a poetry which is still so vital with the life of past centuries, is all the more remarkable because Italian history is distinguished above that of other nations by tragic episodes peculiarly suited to poetic treatment. Many of these received commemoration in the fourteenth century from Dante ; others were embodied in the *novelle* of Boccaccio and Cinthio and Bandello, whence they passed into the dramas of Shakespeare, Webster, Ford, and their contemporaries. But scarcely an echo can be traced through all the volumes of the recently collected popular songs. We must seek for an explanation of this fact partly in the conditions of Italian life and partly in the nature of the Italian imagination. Nowhere in Italy do we observe that intimate connection between the people at large and the great nobles which generates the sympathy of clanship. Politics in most parts of the peninsula fell at a very early period into the hands either of irresponsible princes, who ruled like despots, or else of burghers, who administered the State within the walls of their Palazzo Pubblico. The people remained passive spectators of contemporary history. The loyalty of subjects to their sovereign which animates the Spanish ballads, the

loyalty of retainers to their chief which gives life to the tragic ballads of the border, did not exist in Italy. Country-folk felt no interest in the doings of Visconti or Medici or Malatesti sufficient to arouse the enthusiasm of local bards or to call forth the celebration of their princely tragedies in verse. Amid the miseries of foreign wars and home oppression, it seemed better to demand from verse and song some mitigation of the woes of life, some expression of personal emotion, than to record the disasters which to us at a distance appear poetic in their grandeur.

These conditions of popular life, although unfavorable to the production of ballad poetry, would not, however, have been sufficient by themselves to check its growth if the Italians had been strongly impelled to literature of this type by their nature. The real reason why their *Volkslieder* are amorous and personal is to be found in the quality of their imagination. The Italian genius is not creatively imaginative in the highest sense. The Italians have never, either in the ancient or the modern age, produced a great drama or a national epic, the *Æneid* and the *Divina Comedia* being obviously of different species from the *Iliad* or the *Nibelungen Lied*. Modern Italians, again, are distinguished from the French, the Germans, and the English in being the conscious inheritors of an older, august, and strictly classical civilization. The great memories of Rome weigh down their faculties of invention. It would also seem as though they shrank in their poetry from the representation of what is tragic and spirit-stirring. They incline to what is cheerful, brilliant, or pathetic. The dramatic element in human life, external to the personality of the poet, which exercised so strong a fascination over our ballad-bards and playwrights, has but little attraction for the Italian. When he sings, he seeks to express his own individual emotions—his love, his joy, his jealousy, his anger, his despair. The language which he uses is at the same time direct in its intensity and

hyperbolical in its display of fancy; but it lacks those imaginative touches which exalt the poetry of personal passion into a sublimer region. Again, the Italians are deficient in a sense of the supernatural. The wraiths that cannot rest because their love is still unsatisfied, the voices which cry by night over field and fell, the water-spirits and forest fairies, the second-sight of coming woes, the presentiment of death, the warnings and the charms and spells, which fill the popular poetry of all Northern nations, are absent in Italian songs. In the whole of Tigri's collection I only remember one mention of a ghost. It is not that the Italians are deficient in superstitions of all kinds. Every one has heard of their belief in the evil eye, for instance. But they do not connect this kind of fetichism with their poetry; and even their greatest poets, with the exception of Dante, have shown no capacity or no inclination for enhancing the imaginative effect of their creations by an appeal to the instinct of mysterious awe.

The truth is that the Italians as a race are distinguished as much by a firm grasp upon the practical realities of existence as by powerful emotions. They have but little of that dreamy *Schwärmerei* with which the people of the North are largely gifted. The true sphere of their genius is painting. What appeals to the imagination through the eyes, they have expressed far better than any other modern nation. But their poetry, like their music, is deficient in tragic sublimity and in the higher qualities of imaginative creation. It may seem paradoxical to say this of the nation which produced Dante. But we must remember not to judge races by single and exceptional men of genius. Petrarch, the Troubadour of exquisite emotions, Boccaccio, who touches all the keys of life so lightly, Ariosto, with the smile of everlasting April on his lips, and Tasso, excellent alone when he confines himself to pathos or the picturesque, are no exceptions to what I have just said. Yet these poets pursued their art with

conscious purpose. The tragic splendor of Greece, the majesty of Rome, were not unknown to them. Far more is it true that popular poetry in Italy, proceeding from the hearts of uncultivated peasants and expressing the national character in its simplicity, displays none of the stuff from which the greatest works of art in verse, epics, and dramas can be wrought. But within its own sphere of personal emotion, this popular poetry is exquisitely melodious, inexhaustibly rich, unique in modern literature for the direct expression which it has given to every shade of passion.

Signor Tigri's collection,* to which I shall confine my attention in this paper, consists of eleven hundred and eighty-five *rispetti*, with the addition of four hundred and sixty-one *stornelli*. *Rispetto*, it may be said in passing, is the name commonly given throughout Italy to short poems, varying from six to twelve lines, constructed on the principle of the octave stanza. That is to say, the first part of the *rispetto* consists of four or six lines with alternate rhymes, while one or more couplets, called the *ripresa*, complete the poem.† The *stornello*, or *ritournelle*, never exceeds three lines, and owes its name to the return which it makes at the end of the last line to the rhyme given by the emphatic word of the first. Browning, in his poem of Fra Lippo Lippi, has accustomed English ears to one common species of the *stornello*,‡ which sets out with the name of a flower, and rhymes with it, as thus:

* *Canti Popolari Toscani, raccolti e annotati da Giuseppe Tigri. Volume unico. Firenze, G. Barbèra, 1869.*

† This is a description of the Tuscan *rispetto*. In Sicily the stanza generally consists of eight lines rhyming alternately throughout, while in the North of Italy it is normally a simple quatrain. The same poetical material assumes in Northern, Central, and Southern Italy these diverse but associated forms.

‡ This song, called *Ciure* (Sicilian for *flower*) in Sicily, is said by Signor Pitré to be in disrepute there. He once asked an old dame of Palermo to repeat

Fior di narciso.
Prigionero d'amore mi son reso,
Nel rimirare il tuo leggiadro viso.

The divisions of those two sorts of songs, to which Tigri gives names like the Beauty of Women, The Beauty of Men, Falling in Love, Serenades, Happy Love, Unhappy Love, Parting, Absence, Letters, Return to Home, Anger and Jealousy, Promises, Entreaties and Reproaches, Indifference, Treachery and Abandonment, prove with what fulness the various phases of the tender passion are treated. Through the whole fifteen hundred the one theme of Love is never relinquished. Only two persons, "I" and "thou," appear upon the scene; yet so fresh and so various are the moods of feeling that one can read them from first to last without too much satiety.

To seek for the authors of these ditties would be useless. Some of them may be as old as the fourteenth century; others may have been made yesterday. Some are the native product of the Tuscan mountain villages, especially of the regions round Pistoja and Siena, where on the spurs of the Apennines the purest Italian is vernacular. Some, again, are importations from other provinces, especially from Sicily and Naples, caught up by the peasants of Tuscany and adapted to their taste and style; for nothing travels faster than a *Volkslied*. Born some morning in a noisy street of Naples, or on the solitary slopes of Radicofani, before the week is out a hundred voices are repeating it. Wagoners and peddlers carry it across the hills to distant towns. It floats with the fishermen from bay to bay, and marches with the conscript to his barrack in a far-off province. Who was the first to give it shape

him some of these ditties. Her answer was, "You must get them from light women; I do not know any. They sing them in bad houses and prisons, where, God be praised, I have never been." In Tuscany there does not appear to be so marked a distinction between the flower-song and the *rispetto*.

and form? No one asks, and no one cares. A student well acquainted with the habits of the people in these matters says, "If they knew the author of a ditty, they would not learn it, far less if they discovered that it was a scholar's." If the cadence takes their ear, they consecrate the song at once by placing it upon the honored list of "ancient lays." Passing from lip to lip and from district to district, it receives additions and alterations, and becomes the property of a score of provinces. Meanwhile the poet from whose soul it blossomed that first morning like a flower remains contented with obscurity. The wind has carried from his lips the thistle-down of song, and sown it on a hundred hills and meadows, far and wide. After such wise is the birth of all truly popular compositions. Who knows, for instance, the veritable author of many of those mighty German chorals which sprang into being at the period of the Reformation? The first inspiration was given, probably, to a single mind; but the melody, as it has reached us, is the product of a thousand. This accounts for the variations which in different dialects and districts the same song presents. Meanwhile it is sometimes possible to trace the authorship of a ballad with marked local character to an improvisator famous in his village, or to one of those professional rhymesters whom the country-folk employ in the composition of love-letters to their sweethearts at a distance.* Tommaseo, in the preface to his *Canti Popolari*, mentions in particular a Beatrice di Pian degli Ontani, whose poetry was famous through the mountains of Pistoja; and Tigri records by name a little girl called Cherubina, who made *rispetti* by the dozen as she watched her

* Much light has lately been thrown on the popular poetry of Italy; and it appears that contemporary improvisators trust more to their richly stocked memories and to their power of recombination than to original or novel inspiration. It is in Sicily that the vein of truly creative lyric utterance is said to flow most freely and most copiously at the present time.

sheep upon the hills. One of the songs in his collection (page 181) contains a direct reference to the village letter-writer :

Salutatemi, bella, lo scrivano ;
Non lo conosco e non so chi si sia.
A me mi pare un poeta sovrano,
Tanto gli è sperto nella poesia.*

While I am writing thus about the production and dissemination of these love-songs, I cannot help remembering three days and nights which I once spent at sea between Genoa and Palermo, in the company of some conscripts who were going to join their regiment in Sicily. They were lads from the Milanese and Liguria, and they spent a great portion of their time in composing and singing poetry. One of them had a fine baritone voice ; and when the sun had set, his comrades gathered round him and begged him to sing to them "*Con quella patetica tua voce.*" Then followed hours of singing, the low monotonous melodies of his ditties harmonizing wonderfully with the tranquillity of night, so clear and calm that the sky and all its stars were mirrored on the sea, through which we moved as if in a dream. Sometimes the songs provoked conversation, which, as is usual in Italy, turned mostly upon "*le bellezze delle donne.*" I remember that once an animated discussion about the relative merits of blondes and brunettes nearly ended in a quarrel, when the youngest of the whole band, a boy of about seventeen, put a stop to the dispute by theatrically raising his eyes and arms to heaven and crying, "*Tu sei innamorato d'una grande Diana cacciatrice nera, ed io d'una bella Venere bionda.*" Though they were but village lads, they supported their several opinions with arguments not unworthy of Firenzuola, and showed the greatest delicacy of feeling in the

* Remember me, fair one, to the scrivener. I do not know him or who he is, but he seems to me a sovereign poet, so cunning is he in his use of verse.

treatment of a subject which could scarcely have failed to reveal any latent coarseness.

The purity of all the Italian love-songs collected by Tigri is very remarkable.* Although the passion expressed in them is Oriental in its vehemence, not a word falls which could offend a virgin's ear. The one desire of lovers is lifelong union in marriage. The *damo*—for so a sweetheart is termed in Tuscany—trembles until he has gained the approval of his future mother-in-law, and forbids the girl he is courting to leave her house to talk to him at night:

Dice che tu ti affacci alla finestra :
Ma non ti dice che tu vada fuora,
Perché, la notte, é cosa disonesta.

All the language of his love is respectful. *Signore*, or master of my soul, *madonna*, *anima mia*, *dolce mio ben*, *nobil persona*, are the terms of adoration with which he approaches his mistress. The elevation of feeling and perfect breeding which Manzoni has so well delineated in the loves of Renzo and Lucia are traditional among Italian country-folk. They are conscious that true gentleness is no matter of birth or fortune:

E tu non mi lasciar per povertà,
Chè povertà non guasta gentilezza.†

* It must be remarked that Tigri draws a strong contrast in this respect between the songs of the mountain districts which he has printed and those of the towns, and that Pitré, in his edition of Sicilian *Volkslieder*, expressly alludes to the coarseness of a whole class which he had omitted. The MSS. of Sicilian and Tuscan songs, dating from the fifteenth century and earlier, yield a fair proportion of decidedly obscene compositions. Yet the fact stated above is integrally correct. When acclimatized in the large towns, the rustic Muse not unfrequently assumes a garb of grossness. At home, among the fields and on the mountains, she remains chaste and romantic.

† In a *rispetto*, of which I subjoin a translation, sung by a poor lad to

This in itself constitutes an important element of culture, and explains to some extent the high romantic qualities of their impassioned poetry. The beauty of their land reveals still more. "O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint!" Virgil's exclamation is as true now as it was when he sang the labors of Italian country-folk some nineteen centuries ago. To a traveller from the North there is a pathos even in the contrast between the country in which these children of a happier climate toil, and those bleak, winter-beaten fields where our own peasants pass their lives. The cold nights and warm days of Tuscan spring-time are like a Swiss summer. They make rich pasture and a hardy race of men. Tracts of corn and oats and rye alternate with patches of flax in full flower, with meadows yellow with buttercups or pink with ragged robin; the young vines, running from bough to bough of elm and mulberry, are just coming into leaf. The poplars are fresh with bright green foliage. On the verge of this blooming plain stand ancient cities ringed with hills, some rising to snowy Apennines, some covered with white convents and sparkling with villas. Cypressess shoot, black and spirelike, amid gray clouds of olive-boughs upon the slopes; and above, where vegetation borders on the barren rock, are masses of ilex and arbutus interspersed with chestnut-trees not yet in leaf. Men and women are everywhere at work, ploughing with great white oxen, or tilling the soil with spades six feet in length—Sabellian *ligones*. The songs of nightingales among acacia-trees, and the sharp scream of swal-

a mistress of higher rank, love itself is pleaded as the sign of a gentle soul:

My state is poor: I am not meet
To court so nobly born a love;
For poverty hath tied my feet,
Trying to climb too far above.
Yet am I gentle, loving thee;
Nor need thou shun my poverty.

lows wheeling in air, mingle with the monotonous chant that always rises from the country people at their toil. Here and there, on points of vantage, where the hill-slopes sink into the plain, cluster white villages with flower-like *campanili*. It is there that the *veglia*, or evening rendezvous of lovers, the serenades and balls and *feste*, of which one hears so much in the popular minstrelsy, take place. Of course it would not be difficult to paint the darker shades of this picture. Autumn comes, when the *contadini* of Lucca and Siena and Pistoja go forth to work in the unwholesome marshes of the Maremma, or of Corsica and Sardinia. Dismal superstitions and hereditary hatreds cast their blight over a life externally so fair. The bad government of centuries has perverted in many ways the instincts of a people naturally mild and cheerful and peace-loving. But as far as nature can make men happy, these husbandmen are surely to be reckoned fortunate, and in their songs we find little to remind us of what is otherwise than sunny in their lot.

A translator of these *Volkslieder* has to contend with difficulties of no ordinary kind. The freshness of their phrases, the spontaneity of their sentiments, and the melody of their unstudied cadences are inimitable. So again is the peculiar effect of their frequent transitions from the most fanciful imagery to the language of prose. No mere student can hope to rival, far less to reproduce, in a foreign tongue, the charm of verse which sprang untaught from the hearts of simple folk, which lives unwritten on the lips of lovers, and which should never be dissociated from singing.* There are, besides, peculiarities in the very structure of the popular *rispetto*. The constant repetition of the same

* When the Cherubina of whom mention has been made above was asked by Signor Tigri to dictate some of her *rispetti*, she answered, "O signore! ne dico tanti quando li canto! . . . ma ora . . . bisognerebbe averli tutti in visione; se no, proprio non vengono."

phrase with slight variations, especially in the closing lines of the *ripresa* of the Tuscan *rispetto*, gives an antique force and flavor to these ditties, like that which we appreciate in our own ballads, but which may easily, in the translation, degenerate into weakness and insipidity. The Tuscan rhymester, again, allows himself the utmost license. It is usual to find mere assonances like *bene* and *piacere*, *oro* and *volo*, *ala* and *alata*, in the place of rhymes; while such remote resemblances of sound as *colli* and *poggi*, *lascia* and *piazza*, are far from uncommon. To match these rhymes by joining "home" and "alone," "time" and "shine," etc., would of course be a matter of no difficulty; but it has seemed to me on the whole best to preserve, with some exceptions, such accuracy as the English ear requires. I fear, however, that, after all, these wild-flowers of song, transplanted to another climate and placed in a hot-house, will appear but pale and hectic by the side of their robuster brethren of the Tuscan hills.

In the following serenade many of the peculiarities which I have just noticed occur. I have also adhered to the irregularity of rhyme which may be usually observed about the middle of the poem (p. 103):

Sleeping or waking, thou sweet face,
Lift up thy fair and tender brow:
List to thy love in this still place;
He calls thee to thy window now:
But bids thee not the house to quit,
Since in the night this were not meet.
Come to thy window, stay within;
I stand without, and sing and sing:
Come to thy window, stay at home;
I stand without, and make my moan.

Here is a serenade of a more impassioned character (p. 99):

I come to visit thee, my beauteous queen,
Thee and the house where thou art harbored:

All the long way upon my knees, my queen,
I kiss the earth where'er thy footsteps tread.
I kiss the earth, and gaze upon the wall
Whereby thou goest, maid imperial!
I kiss the earth, and gaze upon the house
Whereby thou farest, queen most beauteous!

In the next the lover, who has passed the whole night beneath his sweetheart's window, takes leave at the break of day. The feeling of the half-hour before dawn, when the sound of bells rises to meet the growing light, and both form a prelude to the glare and noise of day, is expressed with much unconscious poetry (p. 105):

I see the dawn e'en now begin to peer:
Therefore I take my leave, and cease to sing.
See how the windows open far and near,
And hear the bells of morning, how they ring!
Through heaven and earth the sounds of ringing swell;
Therefore, bright jasmine flower, sweet maid, farewell!
Through heaven and Rome the sound of ringing goes;
Farewell, bright jasmine flower, sweet maiden rose!

The next is more quaint (p. 99):

I come by night, I come, my soul aflame;
I come in this fair hour of your sweet sleep:
And should I wake you up, it were a shame.
I cannot sleep, and lo! I break your sleep.
To wake you were a shame from your deep rest;
Love never sleeps, nor they whom Love hath blest.

A very great many *rispetti* are simple panegyrics of the beloved, to find similitude for whose beauty heaven and earth are ransacked. The compliment of the first line in the following song is perfect (p. 23):

Beauty was born with you, fair maid:
The sun and moon inclined to you;
On you the snow her whiteness laid,
The rose her rich and radiant hue:

Saint Magdalen her hair unbound,
And Cupid taught you how to wound--
How to wound hearts Dan Cupid taught:
Your beauty drives me love-distraught.

'The lady in the next was December's child (p. 25):

O beauty, born in winter's night,
Born in the month of spotless snow:
Your face is like a rose so bright;
Your mother may be proud of you!
She may be proud, lady of love,
Such sunlight shines her house above:
She may be proud, lady of heaven,
Such sunlight to her home is given.

The sea wind is the source of beauty to another (p. 16):

Nay, marvel not you are so fair;
For you beside the sea were born;
The sea-waves keep you fresh and fair,
Like roses on their leafy thorn.
If roses grow on the rose-bush,
Your roses through midwinter blush;
If roses bloom on the rose-bed,
Your face can show both white and red.

The eyes of a fourth are compared, after quite a new and original fashion, to stars (p. 210):

The moon hath risen her plaint to lay
Before the face of Love Divine,
Saying in heaven she will not stay,
Since you have stolen what made her shine:
Aloud she wails with sorrow wan,—
She told her stars and two are gone:
They are not there; you have them now;
They are the eyes in your bright brow.

Nor are girls less ready to praise their lovers, but that they do not

dwell so much on physical perfection. Here is a pleasant greeting (p. 124):

O welcome, welcome, lily white,
 Thou fairest youth of all the valley !
 When I'm with you, my soul is light ;
 I chase away dull melancholy.
 I chase all sadness from my heart :
 Then welcome, dearest that thou art !
 I chase all sadness from my side :
 Then welcome, O my love, my pride !
 I chase all sadness far away :
 Then welcome, welcome, love, to-day !

The image of a lily is very prettily treated in the next (p. 79):

I planted a lily yestreen at my window ;
 I set it yestreen, and to-day it sprang up :
 When I opened the latch and leaned out of my window,
 It shadowed my face with its beautiful cup.
 O lily, my lily, how tall you are grown !
 Remember how dearly I loved you, my own.
 O lily, my lily, you'll grow to the sky !
 Remember I love you forever and aye.

The same thought of love growing like a flower receives another turn (p. 69):

On yonder hill I saw a flower ;
 And, could it thence be hither borne,
 I'd plant it here within my bower,
 And water it both eve and morn.
 Small water wants the stem so straight :
 'Tis a love-lily stout as fate.
 Small water wants the root so strong :
 'Tis a love-lily lasting long.
 Small water wants the flower so sheen :
 'Tis a love-lily ever green.

Envious tongues have told a girl that her complexion is not good.

She replies, with imagery like that of Virgil's "*Alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur*" (p. 31):

Think it no grief that I am brown,
For all brunettes are born to reign:
White is the snow, yet trodden down;
Black pepper kings need not disdain:
White snow lies mounded on the vales;
Black pepper's weighed in brazen scales.

Another song runs on the same subject (p. 38):

The whole world tells me that I'm brown,
The brown earth gives us goodly corn;
The clove-pink, too, however brown,
Yet proudly in the hand 'tis borne.
They say my love is black, but he
Shines like an angel form to me:
They say my love is dark as night;
To me he seems a shape of light.

The freshness of the following spring song recalls the ballads of the Val de Vire in Normandy (p. 85):

It was the morning of the first of May,
Into the close I went to pluck a flower;
And there I found a bird of woodland gay,
Who whiled with songs of love the silent hour.
O bird, who fliest from fair Florence, how
Dear love begins, I prithee teach me now!—
Love it begins with music and with song,
And ends with sorrow and with sighs ere long.

Love at first sight is described (p. 79):

The very moment that we met,
That moment love began to beat:
One glance of love we gave, and swore
Never to part for evermore;
We swore together, sighing deep,
Never to part till Death's long sleep.

Here, too, is a memory of the first days of love (p. 79):

If I remember, it was May
When love began between us two:
The roses in the close were gay,
The cherries blackened on the bough.
O cherries black and pears so green!
Of maidens fair you are the queen:
Fruit of black cherry and sweet pear!
Of sweethearts you're the queen, I swear.

The troth is plighted with such promises as these (p. 230):

Or ere I leave you, love divine,
Dead tongues shall stir and utter speech,
And running rivers flow with wine,
And fishes swim upon the beach;
Or ere I leave or shun you, these
Lemons shall grow on orange-trees.

The girl confesses her love after this fashion (p. 86):

Passing across the billowy sea,
I let, alas, my poor heart fall;
I bade the sailors bring it me;
They said they had not seen it fall.
I asked the sailors, one and two;
They said that I had given it you.
I asked the sailors, two and three;
They said that I had given it thee.

It is not uncommon to speak of love as a sea. Here is a curious play upon this image (p. 227):

Ho, Cupid! Sailor Cupid, ho!
Lend me awhile that bark of thine;
For on the billows I will go,
To find my love who once was mine:
And if I find her, she shall wear
A chain around her neck so fair,
Around her neck a glittering bond,
Four stars, a lily, a diamond.

It is also possible that the same thought may occur in the second line of the next ditty (p. 120) :

Beneath the earth I'll make a way
To pass the sea and come to you.
People will think I'm gone away ;
But, dear, I shall be seeing you.
People will say that I am dead ;
But we'll pluck roses white and red :
People will think I'm lost for aye ;
But we'll pluck roses, you and I.

All the little daily incidents are beautified by love. Here is a lover who thanks the mason for making his window so close upon the road that he can see his sweetheart as she passes (p. 118) :

Blest be the mason's hand who built
This house of mine by the roadside,
And made my window low and wide
For me to watch my love go by.
And if I knew when she went by,
My window should be fairly gilt ;
And if I knew what time she went,
My window should be flower-besprent.

Here is a conceit which reminds one of the pretty epistle of Philostratus, in which the footsteps of the beloved are called *ἐρηρυσμένα φιλήματα* (p. 117) :

What time I see you passing by,
I sit and count the steps you take :
You take the steps ; I sit and sigh :
Step after step, my sighs awake.
Tell me, dear love, which more abound,
My sighs or your steps on the ground ?
Tell me, dear love, which are the most,
Your light steps or the sighs they cost ?

A girl complains that she cannot see her lover's house (p. 117) :

I lean upon the lattice, and look forth
 To see the house wherein my lover dwells.
 There grows an envious tree that spoils my mirth :
 Cursed be the man who set it on these hills !
 But when those jealous boughs are all unclad,
 I then shall see the cottage of my lad :
 When once that tree is rooted from the hills,
 I'll see the house wherein my lover dwells.

In the same mood a girl who has just parted from her sweetheart
 is angry with the hill beyond which he is travelling (p. 167) :

I see and see, yet see not what I would :
 I see the leaves atremble on the tree :
 I saw my love where on the hill he stood,
 Yet see him not drop downward to the lea.
 O traitor hill, what will you do ?
 I ask him, live or dead, from you.
 O traitor hill, what shall it be ?
 I ask him, live or dead, from thee.

All the songs of love in absence are very quaint. Here is one
 which calls our nursery rhymes to mind (p. 119) :

I would I were a bird so free,
 That I had wings to fly away :
 Unto that window I would flee,
 Where stands my love and grinds all day.
 Grind, miller, grind ; the water's deep !
 I cannot grind ; love makes me weep.
 Grind, miller, grind ; the waters flow !
 I cannot grind ; love wastes me so.

The next begins after the same fashion, but breaks into a very
 shower of benedictions (p. 118) :

Would God I were a swallow free,
 That I had wings to fly away :
 Upon the miller's door I'd be,
 Where stands my love and grinds all day :

Upon the door, upon the sill,
Where stays my love;—God bless him still!
God bless my love, and blessed be
His house, and bless my house for me;
Yea, blest be both, and ever blest
My lover's house, and all the rest!

The girl alone at home in her garden sees a wood-dove flying by
and calls to it (p. 179):

O dove, who fliest far to yonder hill,
Dear dove, who in the rock hast made thy nest,
Let me a feather from thy pinion pull,
For I will write to him who loves me best.
And when I've written it and made it clear,
I'll give thee back thy feather, dove so dear:
And when I've written it and sealed it, then
I'll give thee back thy feather love-laden.

A swallow is asked to lend the same kind service (p. 179):

O swallow, swallow, flying through the air,
Turn, turn, I prithee, from thy flight above!
Give me one feather from thy wing so fair,
For I will write a letter to my love.
When I have written it and made it clear,
I'll give thee back thy feather, swallow dear;
When I have written it on paper white,
I'll make, I swear, thy missing feather right;
When once 'tis written on fair leaves of gold,
I'll give thee back thy wing and flight so bold.

Long before Tennyson's song in the *Princess*, it would seem that swallows were favorite messengers of love. In the next song which I translate, the repetition of one thought with delicate variation is full of character (p. 178):

O swallow, flying over hill and plain,
If thou shouldst find my love, oh bid him come!
And tell him on these mountains I remain
Even as a lamb who cannot find her home:

And tell him I am left all, all alone,
 Even as a tree whose flowers are overblown :
 And tell him I am left without a mate
 Even as a tree whose boughs are desolate :
 And tell him I am left un comforted
 Even as the grass upon the meadows dead.

The following is spoken by a girl who has been watching the lads of the village returning from their autumn service in the plain, and whose *damo* comes the last of all (p. 240) :

O dear my love, you come too late !
 What found you by the way to do ?
 I saw your comrades pass the gate,
 But yet not you, dear heart, not you !
 If but a little more you'd stayed,
 With sighs you would have found me dead ;
 If but a while you'd kept me crying,
 With sighs you would have found me dying.

The *amantium iræ* find a place too in these rustic ditties. A girl explains to her sweetheart (p. 240) :

'Twas told me and vouchsafed for true,
 Your kin are wroth as wroth can be ;
 For loving me they swear at you,
 They swear at you because of me ;
 Your father, mother, all your folk,
 Because you love me, chafe and choke :
 Then set your kith and kin at ease ;
 Set them at ease and let me die :
 Set the whole clan of them at ease ;
 Set them at ease and see me die !

Another suspects that her *damo* has paid his suit to a rival (p. 200) :

On Sunday morning well I knew
 Where gayly dressed you turned your feet ;
 And there were many saw it too,
 And came to tell me through the street :

And when they spoke, I smiled, ah me !
But in my room wept privately ;
And when they spoke, I sang for pride,
But in my room alone I sighed.

Then come reconciliations (p. 223) :

Let us make peace, my love, my bliss !
For cruel strife can last no more.
If you say nay, yet I say yes :
'Twixt me and you there is no war.
Princes and mighty lords make peace ;
And so may lovers twain, I wis :
Princes and soldiers sign a truce ;
And so may two sweethearts like us :
Princes and potentates agree ;
And so may friends like you and me.

There is much character about the following, which is spoken by the *damo* (p. 223) :

As yonder mountain height I trod,
I chanced to think of your dear name ;
I knelt with claspèd hands on the sod,
And thought of my neglect with shame :
I knelt upon the stone, and swore
Our love should bloom as heretofore.

Sometimes the language of affection takes a more imaginative tone, as in the following (p. 232) :

Dearest, what time you mount to heaven above,
I'll meet you holding in my hand my heart :
You to your breast shall clasp me full of love,
And I will lead you to our Lord apart.
Our Lord, when he our love so true hath known,
Shall make of our two hearts one heart alone ;
One heart shall make of our two hearts, to rest
In heaven amid the splendors of the blest.

This was the woman's. Here is the man's (p. 113) :

If I were master of all loveliness,
 I'd make thee still more lovely than thou art :
 If I were master of all wealthiness,
 Much gold and silver should be thine, sweetheart !
 If I were master of the house of hell,
 I'd bar the brazen gates in thy sweet face ;
 Or ruled the place where purging spirits dwell,
 I'd free thee from that punishment apace.
 Were I in paradise and thou shouldst come,
 I'd stand aside, my love, to make thee room ;
 Were I in paradise, well seated there,
 I'd quit my place to give it thee, my fair !

Sometimes, but very rarely, weird images are sought to clothe passion, as in the following (p. 136) :

Down into hell I went and thence returned :
 Ah me ! alas ! the people that were there !
 I found a room where many candles burned,
 And saw within my love that languished there.
 When as she saw me, she was glad of cheer,
 And at the last she said : Sweet soul of mine,
 Dost thou recall the time long past, so dear,
 When thou didst say to me, Sweet soul of mine ?
 Now kiss me on the mouth, my dearest, here ;
 Kiss me that I for once may cease to pine !
 So sweet, ah me, is thy dear mouth, so dear,
 That of thy mercy prithee sweeten mine !
 Now love, that thou hast kissed me, now, I say,
 Look not to leave this place again for aye.

Or again in this (p. 232) :

Methinks I hear, I hear a voice that cries :
 Beyond the hill it floats upon the air.
 It is my lover come to bid me rise,
 If I am fain forthwith toward heaven to fare.

But I have answered him, and said him No !
I've given my paradise, my heaven, for you :
Till we together go to paradise,
I'll stay on earth and love your beauteous eyes.

But it is not with such remote and eerie thoughts that the rustic muse of Italy can deal successfully. Far better is the following half-playful description of love sadness (p. 71) :

Ah me, alas ! who knew not how to sigh !
Of sighs I now full well have learned the art :
Sighing at table when to eat I try,
Sighing within my little room apart,
Sighing when jests and laughter round me fly,
Sighing with her and her who know my heart :
I sigh at first, and then I go on sighing ;
'Tis for your eyes that I am ever sighing :
I sigh at first, and sigh the whole year through ;
And 'tis your eyes that keep me sighing so.

The next two *rispetti*, delicious in their *naïveté*, might seem to have been extracted from the libretto of an opera, but that they lack the sympathizing chorus, who should have stood at hand ready to chime in with "he," "she," and "they," to the "I," "you," and "we" of the lovers (p. 123) :

Ah, when will dawn that glorious day
When you will softly mount my stair ?
My kin shall bring you on the way :
I shall be first to greet you there.
Ah, when will dawn that day of bliss
When we before the priest say Yes ?

Ah, when will dawn that blissful day
When I shall softly mount your stair,
Your brothers meet me on the way,
And one by one I greet them there ?
When comes the day, my staff, my strength,
To call your mother mine at length ?

When will the day come, love of mine,
I shall be yours and you be mine ?

Hitherto the songs have told only of happy love or of love returned. Some of the best, however, are unhappy. Here is one, for instance, steeped in gloom (p. 142) :

They have this custom in fair Naples town ;
They never mourn a man when he is dead :
The mother weeps when she has reared a son
To be a serf and slave by love misled ;
The mother weeps when she a son hath borne
To be the serf and slave of galley scorn ;
The mother weeps when she a son gives suck
To be the serf and slave of city luck.

The following contains a fine wild image, wrought out with strange passion in detail (p. 300) :

I'll spread a table brave for revelry,
And to the feast will bid sad lovers all.
For meat I'll give them my heart's misery ;
For drink I'll give these briny tears that fall.
Sorrows and sighs shall be the varletry,
To serve the lovers at this festival :
The table shall be death, black death profound ;
Weep, stones, and utter sighs, ye walls around !
The table shall be death, yea, sacred death ;
Weep, stones, and sigh as one that sorroweth !

Nor is the next a whit less in the vein of mad Jeronimo (p. 304) :

High up, high up, a house I'll rear,
High up, high up, on yonder height ;
At every window set a snare,
With treason, to betray the night ;
With treason, to betray the stars,
Since I'm betrayed by my false feres ;
With treason, to betray the day,
Since Love betrayed me, well away !

The vengeance of an Italian reveals itself in the energetic song which I quote next (p. 303):

I have a sword; 'twould cut a brazen bell,
Tough steel 'twould cut, if there were any need :
I've had it tempered in the streams of hell
By masters mighty in the mystic rede :
I've had it tempered by the light of stars ;
Then let him come whose skin is stout as Mars ;
I've had it tempered to a trenchant blade ;
Then let him come who stole from me my maid.

More mild, but brimful of the bitterness of a soul to whom the whole world has become but ashes in the death of love, is the following lament (p. 143):

Call me the lovely Golden Locks no more,
But call me Sad Maid of the golden hair.
If there be wretched women, sure I think
I too may rank among the most forlorn.
I fling a palm into the sea; 'twill sink :
Others throw lead, and it is lightly borne.
What have I done, dear Lord, the world to cross ?
Gold in my hand forthwith is turned to dross.
How have I made, dear Lord, dame Fortune wroth ?
Gold in my hand forthwith is turned to froth.
What have I done, dear Lord, to fret the folk ?
Gold in my hand forthwith is turned to smoke.

Here is pathos (p. 172):

The wood-dove who hath lost her mate,
She lives a dolorous life, I ween ;
She seeks a stream and bathes in it,
And drinks that water foul and green :
With other birds she will not mate,
Nor haunt, I wis, the flowery treen ;
She bathes her wings and strikes her breast ;
Her mate is lost : oh, sore unrest !

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And here is fanciful despair (p. 168) :

I'll build a house of sobs and sighs,
With tears the lime I'll slack ;
And there I'll dwell with weeping eyes
Until my love come back :
And there I'll stay with eyes that burn
Until I see my love return.

The house of love has been deserted, and the lover comes to moan
beneath its silent caves (p. 171) :

Dark house and window desolate !
Where is the sun which shone so fair ?
'Twas here we danced and laughed at fate :
Now the stones weep ; I see them there.
They weep, and feel a grievous chill :
Dark house and widowed window-sill !

And what can be more piteous than this prayer ? (p. 309) :

Love, if you love me, delve a tomb,
And lay me there the earth beneath ;
After a year, come see my bones,
And make them dice to play therewith.
But when you're tired of that game,
Then throw those dice into the flame ;
But when you're tired of gaming free,
Then throw those dice into the sea.

The simpler expression of sorrow to the death is, as usual, more
impressive. A girl speaks thus within sight of the grave (p. 308) :

Yes, I shall die : what wilt thou gain ?
The cross before my bier will go ;
And thou wilt hear the bells complain,
The *Misereres* loud and low.
Midmost the church thou'lt see me lie
With folded hands and frozen eye ;
Then say at last, I do repent !
Naught else remains when fires are spent.

Here is a rustic *Cenone* (p. 307) :

Fell death, that fliest fraught with woe !
Thy gloomy snares the world ensphere :
Where no man calls, thou lov'st to go ;
But when we call, thou wilt not hear.
Fell death, false death of treachery,
Thou makest all content but me.

Another is less reproachful, but scarcely less sad (p. 308) :

Strew me with blossoms when I die,
Nor lay me 'neath the earth below ;
Beyond those walls, there let me lie,
Where oftentimes we used to go.
There lay me to the wind and rain ;
Dying for you, I feel no pain :
There lay me to the sun above ;
Dying for you, I die of love.

Yet another of these pitiful love-wailings displays much poetry of expression (p. 271) :

I dug the sea, and delved the barren sand :
I wrote with dust and gave it to the wind :
Of melting snow, false Love, was made thy band,
Which suddenly the day's bright beams unbind.
Now am I ware, and know my own mistake—
How false are all the promises you make ;
Now am I ware, and know the fact, ah me !
That who confides in you, deceived will be.

It would scarcely be well to pause upon these very doleful ditties. Take, then, the following little serenade, in which the lover on his way to visit his mistress has unconsciously fallen on the same thought as Bion (p. 85) :

Yestreen I went my love to greet,
By yonder village path below :

Night in a coppice found my feet ;
I called the moon her light to show—
O moon, who needs no flame to fire thy face,
Look forth and lend me light a little space !

Enough has been quoted to illustrate the character of the Tuscan popular poetry. These village *rispetti* bear the same relation to the *canzoniere* of Petrarch as the "savage drupe" to the "suave plum." They are, as it were, the wild stock of that highly artificial flower of art. Herein lies, perhaps, their chief importance. As in our ballad literature we may discern the stuff of the Elizabethan drama undeveloped, so in the Tuscan people's songs we can trace the crude form of that poetic instinct which produced the sonnets to Laura. It is also very probable that some such rustic minstrelsy preceded the Idyls of Theocritus and the Bucolics of Virgil ; for coincidences of thought and imagery, which can scarcely be referred to any conscious study of the ancients, are not a few. Popular poetry has this great value for the student of literature : it enables him to trace those forms of fancy and of feeling which are native to the people, and which must ultimately determine the character of national art, however much that may be modified by culture.

ORVIETO.

ON the road from Siena to Rome, half-way between Ficulle and Viterbo, is the town of Orvieto. Travellers often pass it in the night-time. Few stop there, for the place is old and dirty, and its inns are said to be indifferent. But none who see it even from a distance can fail to be struck with its imposing aspect, as it rises from the level plain upon that mass of rock among the Apennines.

Orvieto is built upon the first of those huge volcanic blocks which are found like fossils imbedded in the more recent geological formations of Central Italy, and which stretch in an irregular but unbroken line to the Campagna of Rome. Many of them, like that on which Civita Castellana is perched, are surrounded by rifts and chasms and ravines and fosses, strangely furrowed and twisted by the force of fiery convulsions. But their advanced guard, Orvieto, stands up definite and solid, an almost perfect cube, with walls precipitous to north and south and east, but slightly sloping to the westward. At its foot rolls the Paglia, one of those barren streams which swell in winter with the snows and rains of the Apennines, but which in summer-time shrink up and leave bare beds of sand and pestilential canebrakes to stretch irregularly round their dwindled waters.

The weary flatness and utter desolation of this valley present a sinister contrast to the broad line of the Apennines, swelling tier on tier, from their oak-girdled basements set with villages and towers, up to the snow and cloud that crown their topmost crags. The time to see this landscape is at sunrise; and the traveller

should take his stand upon the rising ground over which the Roman road is carried from the town—the point, in fact, which Turner has selected for his vague and misty sketch of Orvieto in our Gallery. Thence he will command the whole space of the plain, the Apennines, and the river creeping in a straight line at the base; while the sun, rising to his right, will slant along the mountain flanks, and gild the leaden stream, and flood the castled crags of Orvieto with a haze of light. From the centre of this glory stand out in bold relief old bastions built upon the solid tufa, vast gaping gateways black in shadow, towers of churches shooting up above a medley of deep-corniced tall Italian houses, and, amid them all, the marble front of the cathedral, calm and solemn in its unfamiliar Gothic state. Down to the valley from these heights there is a sudden fall; and we wonder how the few spare olive-trees that grow there can support existence on the steep slope of the cliff.

Our mind, in looking at this landscape, is carried by the force of old association to Jerusalem. We could fancy ourselves to be standing on Mount Olivet, with the valley of Jehoshaphat between us and the Sacred City. As we approach the town, the difficulty of scaling its crags seems insurmountable. The road, though carried skilfully along each easy slope or ledge of quarried rock, still winds so much that nearly an hour is spent in the ascent. Those who can walk should take a footpath, and enter Orvieto by the mediæval road, up which many a pope, flying from rebellious subjects or foreign enemies, has hurried on his mule.*

To unaccustomed eyes there is something forbidding and ter-

* Clement VII., for example, escaped from Rome disguised as a gardener after the sack in 1527, and, to quote the words of Varchi (*St. Flor.* v. 17), "Entrò agli otto di dicembre a due ore di notte in Orvieto, terra di sito fortissimo, per lo essere ella sopra uno scoglio pieno di tufi posta, d'ogni intorno scosceso e dirupato," etc.

rible about the dark and cindery appearance of volcanic tufa. Where it is broken, the hard and gritty edges leave little space for vegetation; while at intervals the surface spreads so smooth and straight that one might take it for solid masonry erected by the architect of Pandemonium. Rubbish and shattered bits of earthenware and ashes, thrown from the city walls, cling to every ledge and encumber the broken pavement of the footway. Then as we rise the castle battlements above appear more menacing, toppling upon the rough edge of the crag, and guarding each turn of the road with jealous loopholes or beetle-browed machicolations, until at last the gateway and portcullis are in view.

On first entering Orvieto, one's heart fails to find so terrible a desolation, so squalid a solitude, and so vast a difference between the present and the past, between the beauty of surrounding nature and the misery of this home of men. A long space of unoccupied ground intervenes between the walls and the hovels which skirt the modern town. This, in the times of its splendor, may have served for olive-yards, vineyards, and pasturage, in case of siege. There are still some faint traces of dead gardens left upon its arid wilderness, among the ruins of a castellated palace decorated with the cross-keys and tiara of an unremembered pope. But now it lies a mere tract of scorched grass, insufferably hot and dry and sandy, intersected by dirty paths, and covered with the loathliest offal of a foul Italian town. Should you cross this ground at mid-day, under the blinding sun, when no living thing, except perhaps some poisonous reptile, is about, you would declare that Orvieto had been stricken for its sins by Heaven. Your mind would dwell mechanically on all that you have read of papal crimes, of fratricidal wars, of pagan abominations in the high places of the Church, of tempestuous passions and refined iniquity—of everything, in fact, which renders Italy of the Middle Ages

and the Renaissance dark and ominous amid the splendors of her art and civilization. This is the natural result; this shrunken and squalid old age of poverty and self-abandonment is the end of that strong, prodigal, and vicious youth. Who shall restore vigor to these dead bones? we cry. If Italy is to live again, she must quit her ruined palace towers to build fresh dwellings elsewhere. Filth, lust, rapacity, treason, godlessness, and violence have made their habitation here; ghosts haunt these ruins; these streets still smell of blood and echo to the cries of injured innocence; life cannot be pure or calm or healthy where this curse has settled.

Occupied with such reflections, we reach the streets of Orvieto. They are not very different from those of most Italian villages, except that there is little gayety about them. Like Assisi or Siena, Orvieto is too large for its population, and merriment flows better from close crowding than from spacious accommodation. Very dark and big and dirty and deserted is the judgment we pronounce upon the houses; very filthy and malodorous each passage; very long this central street; very few and sad and sullen the inhabitants; and where, we wonder, is the promised inn? In search of this one walks nearly through the city, until one enters the Piazza, where there is more liveliness. Here cafés may be found; soldiers, strong and sturdy, from the north, lounge at the corners; the shops present more show; and a huge hotel, not bad for such a place, and appropriately dedicated to the Belle Arti, standing in a court-yard of its own, receives the traveller weary with his climb. As soon as he has taken rooms, his first desire is to go forth and visit the cathedral.

The great Duomo was erected at the end of the thirteenth century to commemorate the Miracle of Bolsena. The value of this miracle consisted in its establishing unmistakably the truth of transubstantiation. The story runs that a young Bohemian priest

who doubted the dogma was performing the office of the mass in a church at Bolsena, when, at the moment of consecration, blood issued from five gashes in the wafer, which resembled the five wounds of Christ. The fact was evident to all the worshippers, who saw blood falling on the linen of the altar; and the young priest no longer doubted, but confessed the miracle, and journeyed straightway with the evidence thereof to Pope Urban IV. The Pope, who was then at Orvieto, came out with all his retinue to meet the convert and do honor to the magic-working relics. The circumstances of this miracle are well known to students of art through Raphael's celebrated fresco in the Stanze of the Vatican. And it will be remembered by the readers of ecclesiastical history that Urban had in 1264 promulgated by a bull the strict observance of the Corpus Christi festival in connection with his strong desire to re-establish the doctrine of Christ's presence in the elements. Nor was it without reason that, while seeking miraculous support for this dogma, he should have treated the affair of Bolsena so seriously as to celebrate it by the erection of one of the most splendid cathedrals in Italy; for the peace of the Church had recently been troubled by the reforming ardor of the Fraticelli and by the promulgation of Abbot Joachim's *Eternal Gospel*. This new evangelist had preached the doctrine of progression in religious faith, proclaiming a kingdom of the Spirit which should transcend the kingdom of the Son, even as the Christian dispensation had superseded the Jewish supremacy of the Father. Nor did he fail at the same time to attack the political and moral abuses of the papacy, attributing its degradation to the want of vitality which pervaded the old Christian system, and calling on the clergy to lead more simple and regenerate lives, consistently with the spiritual doctrine which he had received by inspiration. The theories of Joachim were immature and crude; but they were among the first signs of that liberal effort after self-emanci-

pation which eventually stirred all Europe at the time of the Renaissance. It was, therefore, the obvious policy of the popes to crush so dangerous an opposition while they could; and by establishing the dogma of transubstantiation, they were enabled to satisfy the craving mysticism of the people, while they placed upon a firmer basis the cardinal support of their own religious power.

In pursuance of his plan, Urban sent for Lorenzo Maitani, the great Sienese architect, who gave designs for a Gothic church in the same style as the Cathedral of Siena, though projected on a smaller scale. These two churches, in spite of numerous shortcomings manifest to an eye trained in French or English architecture, are still the most perfect specimens of Pointed Gothic produced by the Italian genius. The *Gottico Tedesco* had never been received with favor in Italy. Remains of Roman architecture, then far more numerous and perfect than they are at present, controlled the minds of artists, and induced them to adopt the rounded rather than the pointed arch. Indeed, there would seem to be something peculiarly Northern in the spirit of Gothic architecture; its intricacies suit the gloom of Northern skies, its massive exterior is adapted to the severity of Northern weather, its vast windows catch the fleeting sunlight of the North, and the pinnacles and spires which constitute its beauty are better expressed in rugged stone than in the marbles of the South. Northern cathedrals do not depend for their effect upon the advantages of sunlight or picturesque situations. Many of them are built upon broad plains, over which for more than half the year hangs fog. But the cathedrals of Italy owe their charm to color and brilliancy; their gilded sculpture and mosaics, the variegated marbles and shallow portals of their façades, the light aerial elegance of their *campanili*, are all adapted to the luminous atmosphere of a smiling land, where changing effects of natural

beauty distract the attention from solidity of design and permanence of grandeur in the edifice itself.*

The Cathedral of Orvieto will illustrate these remarks. Its design is very simple. It consists of a parallelogram, from which three chapels of equal size project, one at the east end, and one at the north and south. The windows are small and narrow, the columns round, and the roof displays none of that intricate groining we find in English churches. The beauty of the interior depends on surface decoration, on marble statues, woodwork, and fresco-paintings. Outside, there is the same simplicity of design, the same elaborated local ornament. The sides of the cathedral are austere, their narrow windows cutting horizontal lines of black and white marble. But the façade is a triumph of decorative art. It is strictly what has often been described as a "frontispiece;" for it bears no sincere relation to the construction of the building. The three gables rise high above the aisles. The pinnacles and parapets and turrets are stuck on to look agreeable. It is a screen such as might be completed or left unfinished at will by the architect. Finished as it is, the façade of Orvieto presents a wilderness of beauties. Its pure white marble has been

* In considering why Gothic architecture took so little root in mediæval Italy, we must remember that the Italians had maintained an unbroken connection with pagan Rome, and that many of their finest churches were basilicas appropriated to Christian rites. Add to this that the commerce of their cities, which first acquired wealth in the twelfth century, especially Pisa and Venice, kept them in communication with the Levant, where they admired the masterpieces of Byzantine architecture, and whence they imported Greek artists in mosaic and stone-work. Against these external circumstances, taken in connection with the hereditary leanings of an essentially Latin race, and with the natural conditions of landscape and climate alluded to above, the influence of a few imported German architects could not have had sufficient power to effect a thorough metamorphosis of the national taste. For further treatment of this subject see my *Fine Arts, Renaissance in Italy*, part iii. chap. ii.

mellowed by time to a rich golden hue, in which are set mosaics shining like gems or pictures of enamel. A statue stands on every pinnacle; each pillar has a different design; round some of them are woven wreaths of vine and ivy; acanthus-leaves curl over the capitals, making nests for singing-birds or Cupids; the doorways are a labyrinth of intricate designs, in which the utmost elegance of form is made more beautiful by incrustations of precious agates and Alexandrine glass-work. On every square inch of this wonderful façade have been lavished invention, skill, and precious material. But its chief interest centres in the sculptures executed by Giovanni and Andrea, sons and pupils of Nicola Pisano. The names of these three men mark an era in the history of art. They first rescued Italian sculpture from the grotesqueness of the Lombard and the wooden monotony of the Byzantine styles. Sculpture takes the lead of all the arts. And Nicola Pisano, before Cimabue, before Duccio, even before Dante, opened the gates of beauty, which for a thousand years had been shut up and overgrown with weeds. As Dante invoked the influence of Virgil when he began to write his mediæval poem, and made a heathen bard his hierophant in Christian mysteries, just so did Nicola Pisano draw inspiration from a Græco-Roman sarcophagus. He studied the bass-relief of Phædra and Hippolytus, which may still be seen upon the tomb of Countess Beatrice in the Campo Santo, and so learned by heart the beauty of its lines and the dignity expressed in its figures that in all his subsequent works we trace the elevated tranquillity of Greek sculpture. This imitation never degenerated into servile copying; nor, on the other hand, did Nicola attain the perfect grace of an Athenian artist. He remained a truly mediæval carver, animated with a Christian instead of a pagan spirit, but caring for the loveliness of form which art in the dark ages failed to realize.*

* I am not inclined to reject the old legend mentioned above about Pisano's

Whether it was Nicola or his scholars who designed the bass-reliefs at Orvieto is of little consequence. Vasari ascribes them to the father; but we know that he completed his pulpit at Pisa in 1230, and his death is supposed to have taken place fifteen years before the foundation of the cathedral. At any rate, they are imbued with his genius, and bear the strongest affinity to his sculptures at Pisa, Siena, and Bologna. To estimate the influence they exercised over the arts of sculpture and painting in Italy would be a difficult task. Duccio and Giotto studied here; Ghiberti closely followed them. Signorelli and Raphael made drawings from their compositions. And the spirit which pervades these sculptures may be traced in all succeeding works of art. It is not classic; it is modern, though embodied in a form of beauty modelled on the Greek.

The bass-reliefs are carved on four marble tablets placed beside the porches of the church, and corresponding in size and shape with the chief doorways. They represent the course of Biblical history, beginning with the creation of the world, and ending with the last judgment. If it were possible here to compare them in detail with the similar designs of Ghiberti, Michael Angelo, and Raphael, it might be shown that the Pisani established modes of treating sacred subjects from which those mighty masters never deviated, though each stamped upon them his peculiar genius, making them more perfect as time added to the power of art. It would also be not without interest to show that, in their primitive conceptions of the earliest events in history, the works of the Pisan artists closely resemble some sculptures executed on the walls of Northern cathedrals, as well as early mosaics in the south of Italy. We might have noticed how all the grotesque elements which appear in Nicola Pisano, and which may still be traced in study of the antique. For a full discussion of the question see my *Fine Arts, Renaissance in Italy*, part iii. chap. iii.

Ghiberti, are entirely lost in Michael Angelo, how the supernatural is humanized, how the symbolical receives an actual expression, and how intellectual types are substituted for mere local and individual representations. For instance, the Pisani represent the Creator as a young man standing on the earth, with a benign and dignified expression, and attended by two ministering angels. He is the Christ of the Creed, "by whom all things were made." In Ghiberti we find an older man, sometimes appearing in a whirlwind of clouds and attendant spirits, sometimes walking on the earth, but still far different in conception from the Creative Father of Michael Angelo. The latter is rather the Platonic Demiurgus than the Mosaic God. By every line and feature of his face and flowing hair, by each movement of his limbs, whether he ride on clouds between the waters and the firmament, or stand alone creating by a glance and by a motion of his hand Eve, the full-formed and conscious woman, he is proclaimed the Maker who from all eternity has held the thought of the material universe within his mind. Raphael does not depart from this conception. The profound abstraction of Michael Angelo ruled his intellect, and received from his genius a form of perhaps greater grace. A similar growth from the germinal designs of the Pisani may be traced in many groups.

But we must not linger at the gate. Let us enter the cathedral and see some of the wonders it contains. Statues of gigantic size adorn the nave. Of these, the most beautiful are the work of Ippolito Scalza, an artist whom Orvieto claims with pride as one of her own sons. The long line of saints and apostles whom they represent conduct us to the high-altar, surrounded by its shadowy frescos, and gleaming with the work of carvers in marble and bronze and precious metals. But our steps are drawn towards the chapel of the south transept, where now a golden light from the autumnal sunset falls across a crowd of worshippers.

From far and near the poor people are gathered. Most of them are women. They kneel upon the pavement and the benches, sunburnt faces from the vineyards and the canebrakes of the valley. The old look prematurely aged and withered—their wrinkled cheeks bound up in scarlet and orange-colored kerchiefs, their skinny fingers fumbling on the rosary, and their mute lips moving in prayer. The younger women have great listless eyes and large limbs used to labor. Some of them carry babies trussed up in tight swaddling-clothes. One kneels beside a dark-browed shepherd, on whose shoulder falls his shaggy hair; and little children play about, half hushed, half heedless of the place, among old men whose life has dwindled down into a ceaseless round of prayers. We wonder why this chapel, alone in the empty cathedral, is so crowded with worshippers. They surely are not turned towards that splendid *Pietà* of Scalza—a work in which the marble seems to live a cold, dead, shivering life. They do not heed Angelico's and Signorelli's frescos on the roof and walls. The interchange of light and gloom upon the stalls and carved work of the canopies can scarcely rivet so intense a gaze. All eyes seem fixed upon a curtain of red silk above the altar. Votive pictures, and glass cases full of silver hearts, wax babies, hands and limbs of every kind, are hung round it. A bell rings. A jingling organ plays a little melody in triple time; and from the sacristy comes forth the priest. With much reverence, and with a show of preparation, he and the acolytes around him mount the altar steps and pull a string which draws the curtain. Behind the silken veil we behold Madonna and her child—a faint, old, ugly picture, blackened with the smoke and incense of five hundred years, a wonder-working image, cased in gold, and guarded from the common air by glass and draperies. Jewelled crowns are stuck upon the heads of the mother and the infant. In the efficacy of Madonna di San Brizio to ward off agues, to deliver

from the pangs of childbirth or the fury of the storm, to keep the lover's troth and make the husband faithful to his home, these pious women of the marshes and the mountains put a simple trust.

While the priest sings and the people pray to the dance-music of the organ let us take a quiet seat unseen and picture to our minds how the chapel looked when Angelico and Signorelli stood before its plastered walls and thought the thoughts with which they covered them. Four centuries have gone by since those walls were white and even to their brushes; and now you scarce can see the golden aureoles of saints, the vast wings of the angels, and the flowing robes of prophets through the gloom. Angelico came first, in monk's dress, kneeling before he climbed the scaffold to paint the angry Judge, the Virgin crowned, the white-robed army of the Martyrs, and the glorious company of the Apostles. These he placed upon the roof, expectant of the Judgment. Then he passed away, and Luca Signorelli, the rich man who "lived splendidly and loved to dress himself in noble clothes," the liberal and courteous gentleman, took his place upon the scaffold. For all the worldliness of his attire and all the worldliness of his living, his brain teemed with stern and terrible thoughts. He searched the secrets of sin and of the grave, of destruction and of resurrection; of heaven and hell. All these he has painted on the walls beneath the saints of Fra Angelico. First come the troubles of the last days, the preaching of Antichrist, and the confusion of the wicked. In the next compartment we see the Resurrection from the tomb; and side by side with that is painted Hell. Paradise occupies another portion of the chapel. On each side of the window, beneath the Christ of Fra Angelico, are delineated scenes from the Judgment. A wilderness of arabesques, enclosing medallion portraits of poets and chiaroscuro episodes selected from Dante and Ovid, occupies the lower portions of the chapel walls beneath the

great subjects enumerated above; and here Signorelli has given free rein to his fancy and his mastery over anatomical design, accumulating naked human figures in the most fantastic and audacious variety of pose.

Look at the "*Fulminati*"—so the group of wicked men are called whose death precedes the Judgment. Huge naked angels, sailing upon vanlike wings, breathe columns of red flame upon a crowd of wicked men and women. In vain these sinners avoid the descending fire. It pursues and fells them to the earth. As they fly their eyes are turned towards the dreadful faces in the air. Some hurry through a portico, huddled together, falling men, and women clasping to their arms dead babies scorched with flame. One old man stares straightforward, doggedly awaiting death. One woman scowls defiance as she dies. A youth has twisted both hands in his hair, and presses them against his ears to drown the screams and groans and roaring thunder. They trample upon prostrate forms already stiff. Every shape and attitude of sudden terror and despairing guilt are here. Next comes the Resurrection. Two angels of the Judgment—gigantic figures, with the plumeless wings that Signorelli loves—are seen upon the clouds. They blow trumpets with all their might, so that each naked muscle seems strained to make the blast, which bellows through the air and shakes the sepulchres beneath the earth. Thence rise the dead. All are naked, and a few are seen like skeletons. With painful effort they struggle from the soil that clasps them round, as if obeying an irresistible command. Some have their heads alone above the ground. Others wrench their limbs from the clinging earth; and as each man rises it closes under him. One would think that they were being born again from solid clay, and growing into form with labor. The fully risen spirits stand and walk about, all occupied with the expectation of the Judgment; but those that are yet in the act of rising have no thought but for

the strange and toilsome process of this second birth. Signorelli here, as elsewhere, proves himself one of the greatest painters by the simple means with which he produces the most marvellous effects. His composition sways our souls with all the passion of the terrible scenes that he depicts. Yet what does it contain? Two stern angels on the clouds, a blank gray plain, and a multitude of naked men and women. In the next compartment Hell is painted. This is a complicated picture, consisting of a mass of human beings entangled with torturing fiends. Above hover demons bearing damned spirits, and three angels see that justice takes its course. Signorelli here degenerates into no mediæval ugliness and mere barbarity of form. His fiends are not the bestial creatures of Pisano's bass-reliefs, but models of those monsters which Duppa has engraved from Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment"—lean, naked men, in whose hollow eyes glow the fires of hate and despair, whose nails have grown to claws, and from whose ears have started horns. They sail upon bats' wings; and only by their livid hue, which changes from yellow to the ghastliest green, and by the cruelty of their remorseless eyes, can you know them from the souls they torture. In Hell ugliness and power of mischief come with length of years. Continual growth in crime distorts the form which once was human; and the interchange of everlasting hatred degrades the tormentor and his victim to the same demoniac ferocity. To this design the science of foreshortening, and the profound knowledge of the human form in every posture, give its chief interest. Paradise is not less wonderful. Signorelli has contrived to throw variety and grace into the somewhat monotonous groups which this subject requires. Above are choirs of angels, not like Fra Angelico's, but tall male creatures clothed in voluminous drapery, with grave features and still, solemn eyes. Some are dancing, some are singing to the lute, and one, the most gracious of them all, bends down to aid a

suppliant soul. The men beneath, who listen in a state of bliss, are all undraped. Signorelli, in this difficult composition, remains temperate, serene, and simple; a Miltonic harmony pervades the movement of his angelic choirs. Their beauty is the product of their strength and virtue. No floral ornaments or cherubs, or soft clouds, are found in his Paradise; yet it is fair and full of grace. Here Luca seems to have anticipated Raphael.

It may be parenthetically observed that Signorelli has introduced himself and Niccolò Angeli, treasurer of the cathedral building fund, in the corner of the fresco representing Antichrist, with the date 1503. They stand as spectators and solemn witnesses of the tragedy set forth in all its acts by the great master.

After viewing these frescos we muse and ask ourselves why Signorelli's fame is so inadequate to his deserts? Partly, no doubt, because he painted in obscure Italian towns, and left few easel-pictures.* Besides, the artists of the sixteenth century eclipsed

* The Uffizzi and Pitti Galleries at Florence contain one or two fine specimens of Luca Signorelli's Holy Families, which show his influence over the early manner of Michael Angelo. Into the background of one circular picture he has introduced a group of naked figures, which was imitated by Buonarroti in the Holy Family of the Tribune. The Accademia has also a picture of saints and angels illustrative of his large style and crowded composition. The Brera at Milan can boast of a very characteristic Flagellation, where the nude has been carefully studied, and the brutality of an insolent officer is forcibly represented. But perhaps the most interesting of his works out of Orvieto are those in his native place, Cortona. In the Church of the Gesù, in that town, there is an altar-piece representing Madonna in glory with saints, which also contains on a smaller scale than the principal figures a little design of the Temptation in Eden. You recognize the master's individuality in the muscular and energetic Adam. The Duomo has a Communion of the Apostles which shows Signorelli's independence of tradition. It is the Cenacolo treated with freedom. Christ stands in the midst of the twelve, who are gathered around him, some kneeling and some upright, upon a marble pavement. The whole scene is conceived in a truly grand style—noble atti-

all their predecessors, and the name of Signorelli has been swallowed up in that of Michael Angelo. Vasari said that "esso Michel Angelo imitò l'andar di Luca, come può vedere ognuno."

tudes, broad draperies, sombre and rich coloring, masculine massing of the figures in effective groups. The Christ is especially noble. Swaying a little to the right, he gives the bread to a kneeling apostle. The composition is marked by a dignity and self-restraint which Raphael might have envied. San Niccolo, again, has a fine picture by this master. It is a Deposition with saints and angels—those large-limbed and wide-winged messengers of God whom none but Signorelli realized. The composition of this picture is hazardous, and at first sight it is even displeasing. The figures seem roughly scattered in a vacant space. The dead Christ has but little dignity, and the passion of St. Jerome in the foreground is stiff in spite of its exaggeration. But long study only serves to render this strange picture more and more attractive. Especially noticeable is the youthful angel clad in dark green who sustains Christ. He is a young man in the bloom of strength and beauty, whose long golden hair falls on each side of a sublimely lovely face. Nothing in painting surpasses the modelling of the vigorous but delicate left arm stretched forward to support the heavy corpse. This figure is conceived and executed in a style worthy of the Orvietan frescos. Signorelli, for whose imagination angels had a special charm, has shown here that his too frequent contempt for grace was not the result of insensibility to beauty. Strength is the parent of sweetness in this wonderful winged youth. But not a single sacrifice is made in the whole picture to mere elegance. Cortona is a place which, independently of Signorelli, well deserves a visit. Like all Etruscan towns, it is perched on the top of a high hill, whence it commands a wonderful stretch of landscape—Monte Amiata and Montepulciano to the south, Chiusi with its lake, the lake of Thrasymene, and the whole broad Tuscan plain. The city itself is built on a projecting buttress of the mountain, to which it clings so closely that, in climbing to the terrace of St. Margarita, you lose sight of all but a few towers and house-roofs. One can almost fancy that Signorelli gained his broad and austere style from the habitual contemplation of a view so severe in outline and so vacant in its width. This landscape has none of the variety which distinguishes the prospect from Perugia, none of the suavity of Siena. It is truly sympathetic in its bare simplicity to the style of the great painter of Cortona. Try to see it on a winter morning, when the mists

Nor is it hard to see that what the one began at Orvieto the other completed in the Vatican. These great men had truly kindred spirits. Both struggled to express their intellectual conceptions in the simplest and most abstract forms. The works of both are distinguished by contempt for adventitious ornaments and for the grace of positive color. Both chose to work in fresco, and selected subjects of the gravest and most elevated character. The study of anatomy and the scientific drawing of the naked body which Luca practised were carried to perfection by Michel Angelo. Sublimity of thought and self-restraint pervade their compositions. He who would understand Buonarroti must first appreciate Signorelli. The

are lying white and low and thin upon the plain, when distant hills rise islanded into the air, and the outlines of lakes are just discernible through fleecy haze. Next to Cortona in importance is the Convent of Monte Oliveto in the neighborhood of Siena, where Signorelli painted eight frescos from the story of St. Benedict, distinguished by his customary vigor of conception, masculine force of design, and martial splendor in athletic disdainful young men. One scene in this series, representing the interior of a country inn, is specially interesting for a realism not usual in the work of Signorelli. The frescos painted for Petruccio at Siena, one of which is now in the National Gallery, the fresco in the Sistine Chapel, which has suffered sadly from retouching, and the magnificent classical picture called the "School of Pan," executed for Lorenzo de' Medici, and now at Berlin, must not be forgotten, nor yet the church-pictures scattered over Loroto, Arcevia, Città di Castello, Borgo San Sepolero, Volterra, and other cities of the Tuscan-Umbrian district. Arezzo, it may be added in conclusion, has two altar-pieces of Signorelli's in its Pinacoteca, neither of which add much to our conception of this painter's style. Noticeable as they may be among the works of that period, they prove that his genius was hampered by the narrow and traditional treatment imposed on him in pictures of this kind. Students may be referred to Robert Vischer's *Luca Signorelli*, Leipsic, 1879, for a complete list of the master's works and an exhaustive biography. I have tried to estimate his place in the history of Italian art in my volume on the *Fine Arts, Renaissance in Italy*, part iii. I may also mention two able articles by Professor Colvin, published a few years since in the *Cornhill Magazine*.

latter, it is true, was confined to a narrower circle in his study of the beautiful and the sublime. He had not ascended to that pure idealism, superior to all the accidents of place and time, which is the chief distinction of Michael Angelo's work. At the same time his manner had not suffered from too fervid an enthusiasm for the imperfectly comprehended antique. He painted the life he saw around him, and clothed his men and women in the dress of Italy.

Such reflections, and many more, pass through our mind as we sit and ponder in the chapel, which the daylight has deserted. The country people are still on their knees, still careless of the frescoed forms around them, still praying to Madonna of the Miracles. The service is well-nigh done. The benediction has been given, the organist strikes up his air of Verdi, and the congregation shuffles off, leaving the dimly-lighted chapel for the vast, sonorous, dusky nave. How strange it is to hear that faint strain of a feeble opera sounding where, a short while since, the trumpet-blast of Signorelli's angels seemed to thrill our ears!

THOUGHTS IN ROME ABOUT CHRISTMAS.

WHAT is the meaning of our English Christmas? What makes it seem so truly Northern, national, and homely, that we do not like to keep the feast upon a foreign shore? These questions grew upon me as I stood one Advent afternoon beneath the Dome of Florence. A priest was thundering from the pulpit against French scepticism and exalting the miracle of the Incarnation. Through the whole dim church blazed altar-candles. Crowds of men and women knelt or sat about the transepts murmuring their prayers of preparation for the festival. At the door were peddlers selling little books, in which were printed the offices for Christmas-tide, with stories of St. Felix and St. Catherine, whose devotion to the infant Christ had wrought them weal and promises of the remission of four purgatorial centuries to those who zealously observed the service of the Church at this most holy time. I knew that the people of Florence were preparing for Christmas in their own way. But it was not our way. It happened that outside the church the climate seemed as wintry as our own—snow-storms and ice and wind and chilling fog suggesting Northern cold. But as the palaces of Florence lacked our comfortable firesides, and the greetings of friends lacked our hearty handshakes and loud good-wishes, so there seemed to be a want of the home feeling in those Christmas services and customs. Again I asked myself, "What do we mean by Christmas?"

The same thought pursued me as I drove to Rome by Siena, still and brown, uplifted mid her russet hills and wilderness of

rolling plain; by Chiusi, with its sepulchral city of a dead and unknown people; through the chestnut forests of the Apennines; by Orvieto's rock, Viterbo's fountains, and the oak-grown solitudes of the Ciminian heights, from which one looks across the broad Lake of Bolsena and the Roman plain. Brilliant sunlight, like that of a day in late September, shone upon the landscape, and I thought—Can this be Christmas? Are they bringing mistletoe and holly on the country carts into the towns in far-off England? Is it clear and frosty there, with the tramp of heels upon the flag, or snowing silently, or foggy, with a round red sun and cries of warning at the corners of the streets?

I reached Rome on Christmas-eve in time to hear midnight services in the Sistine Chapel and St. John Lateran, to breathe the dust of decayed shrines, to wonder at doting cardinals begrimed with snuff, and to resent the open-mouthed bad taste of my countrymen, who made a mockery of these palsy-stricken ceremonies. Nine cardinals going to sleep, nine train-bearers talking scandal, twenty huge, handsome Switzers in the dress devised by Michael Angelo, some ushers, a choir caged off by gilded railings, the insolence and eagerness of polyglot tourists, plenty of wax-candles dripping on people's heads, and a continual nasal drone proceeding from the gilded cage, out of which were caught at intervals these words, and these only—"Sæcula sæculorum, amen." Such was the celebrated Sistine service. The chapel blazed with light, and very strange did Michael Angelo's Last Judgment, his Sibyls, and his Prophets appear upon the roof and wall above this motley and unmeaning crowd.

Next morning I put on my dress-clothes and white tie and repaired, with groups of Englishmen similarly attired, and of Englishwomen in black crape (the regulation costume), to St. Peter's. It was a glorious and cloudless morning; sunbeams streamed in columns from the southern windows, falling on the vast space

full of soldiers and a mingled mass of every kind of people. Up the nave stood double files of the pontifical guard. Monks and nuns mixed with the Swiss cuirassiers and halberds. *Contadini* crowded round the sacred images, and especially round the toe of St. Peter. I saw many mothers lift their swaddled babies up to kiss it. Valets of cardinals, with the invariable red umbrellas, hung about side chapels and sacristies. Purple-mantled *monsignori*, like emperor butterflies, floated down the aisles from sunlight into shadow. Movement, color, and the stir of expectation made the church alive. We showed our dress-clothes to the guard, were admitted within their ranks, and solemnly walked up towards the dome. There, under its broad canopy, stood the altar, glittering with gold and candles. The choir was carpeted and hung with scarlet. Two magnificent thrones rose ready for the Pope. Guards of honor, soldiers, attachés, and the élite of the residents and visitors in Rome were scattered in groups, picturesquely varied by ecclesiastics of all orders and degrees. At ten a stirring took place near the great west door. It opened, and we saw the procession of the Pope and his cardinals. Before him marched the singers and the blowers of the silver trumpets, making the most liquid melody. Then came his Cap of Maintenance and three tiaras; then a company of mitred priests; next the cardinals in scarlet; and last, aloft beneath a canopy upon the shoulders of men, and flanked by the mystic fans, advanced the Pope himself, swaying to and fro like a Lama or an Aztec king. Still the trumpets blew most silverly, and still the people knelt; and as he came, we knelt and had his blessing. Then he took his state and received homage. After this the choir began to sing a mass of Palestrina's, and the deacons robed the Pope. Marvellous putting-on and taking-off of robes and tiaras and mitres ensued, during which there was much bowing and praying and burning of incense. At last, when he had

reached the highest stage of sacrificial sanctity, he proceeded to the altar, waited on by cardinals and bishops. Having censed it carefully, he took a higher throne and divested himself of part of his robes. Then the mass went on in earnest till the moment of consecration, when it paused, the Pope descended from his throne, passed down the choir, and reached the altar. Every one knelt; the shrill bell tinkled; the silver trumpets blew; the air became sick and heavy with incense, so that sun and candle-light swooned in an atmosphere of odorous cloud-wreaths. The whole church trembled, hearing the strange subtle music vibrate in the dome, and seeing the Pope with his own hands lift Christ's body from the altar and present it to the people. An old parish priest, pilgrim from some valley of the Apennines, who knelt beside me, cried and quivered with excess of adoration. The great tombs around, the sculptured saints and angels, the dome, the volumes of light and incense and unfamiliar melody, the hierarchy ministrant, the white and central figure of the Pope, the multitude, made up an overpowering scene. What followed was comparatively tedious. My mind again went back to England, and I thought of Christmas services beginning in all village churches and all cathedrals throughout the land—their old familiar hymn, their anthem of Handel, their trite and sleepy sermons. How different the two feasts are—Christmas in Rome, Christmas in England; Italy and the North; the spirit of Latin and the spirit of Teutonic Christianity!

What, then, constitutes the essence of our Christmas as different from that of more Southern nations? In their origin they are the same. The stable of Bethlehem, the star-led kings, the shepherds, and the angels—all the beautiful story, in fact, which St. Luke alone of the Evangelists has preserved for us—are what the whole Christian world owes to the religious feeling of the Hebrews. The first and second chapters of St. Luke are most

important in the history of Christian mythology and art. They are far from containing the whole of what we mean by Christmas; but the religious poetry which gathers round that season must be sought upon their pages. Angels, ever since the Exodus, played a first part in the visions of the Hebrew prophets and in the lives of their heroes. We know not what reminiscences of old Egyptian genii, what strange shadows of the winged beasts of Persia, flitted through their dreams. In the desert or under the boundless sky of Babylon these shapes became no less distinct than the precise outlines of Oriental scenery. They incarnated the vivid thoughts and intense longings of the prophets, who gradually came to give them human forms and titles. We hear of them by name as servants and attendants upon God, as guardians of nations, and patrons of great men. To the Hebrew mind the whole unseen world was full of spirits, active, strong, and swift of flight, of various aspect, and with power of speech. It is hard to imagine what the first Jewish disciples and the early Greek and Roman converts thought of these great beings. To us the hierarchies of Dionysius, the services of the Church, the poetry of Dante and Milton, and the forms of art have made them quite familiar. Northern nations have appropriated the angels and invested them with attributes alien to their Oriental origin. They fly through our pine-forests and the gloom of cloud or storm; they ride upon our clanging bells, and gather in swift squadrons among the arches of Gothic cathedrals; we see them making light in the cavernous depth of woods where sun or moon beams rarely pierce, and ministering to the wounded or the weary; they bear aloft the censers of the mass; they sing in the anthems of choristers, and live in strains of poetry and music; our churches bear their names; we call our children by their titles; we love them as our guardians, and the whole unseen world is made a home to us by their imagined presence. All

these things are the growth of time and the work of races whose myth-making imagination is more artistic than that of the Hebrews. Yet this rich legacy of romance is bound up in the second chapter of St. Luke; and it is to him we must give thanks when at Christmas-tide we read of the shepherds and the angels in English words more beautiful than his own Greek.

The angels in the stable of Bethlehem, the kings who came from the far East, and the adoring shepherds are the gift of Hebrew legend and of the Greek physician Luke to Christmas. How these strange and splendid incidents affect modern fancy remains for us to examine; at present we must ask, What did the Romans give to Christmas? The customs of the Christian religion, like everything that belongs to the modern world, have nothing pure and simple in their nature. They are the growth of long ages and of widely different systems, parts of which have been fused into one living whole. In this respect they resemble our language, our blood, our literature, and our modes of thought and feeling. We find Christianity in one sense wholly original; in another sense composed of old materials; in both senses universal and cosmopolitan. The Roman element in Christmas is a remarkable instance of this acquisitive power of Christianity. The celebration of the festival takes place at the same time as that of the pagan Saturnalia, and from the old customs of that holiday Christmas absorbed much that was consistent with the spirit of the new religion. During the Saturnalia the world enjoyed, in thought at least, a perfect freedom. Men who had gone to bed as slaves rose their own masters. From the *ergastula* and dismal sunless cages they went forth to ramble in the streets and fields. Liberty of speech was given them, and they might satirize those vices of their lords to which on other days they had to minister. Rome on this day, by a strange negation of logic which we might almost call a prompting of blind conscience, negatived

the philosophic dictum that barbarians were by law of nature slaves, and acknowledged the higher principle of equality. The Saturnalia stood out from the whole year as a protest in favor of universal brotherhood and the right that all men share alike to enjoy life after their own fashion within the bounds that nature has assigned them. We do not know how far the Stoic school, which was so strong in Rome, and had so many points of contact with the Christians, may have connected its own theories of equality with this old custom of the Saturnalia. But it is possible that the fellowship of human beings and the temporary abandonment of class prerogatives became a part of Christmas through the habit of the Saturnalia. We are, perhaps, practising a Roman virtue to this day when at Christmas-time our hand is liberal and we think it wrong that the poorest wretch should fail to feel the pleasure of the day.

Of course Christianity inspired the freedom of the Saturnalia with a higher meaning. The mystery of the Incarnation, or the deification of human nature, put an end to slavery through all the year as well as on this single day. What had been a kind of aimless license became the most ennobling principle by which men are exalted to a state of self-respect and mutual reverence. Still, in the Saturnalia was found, ready-made, an easy symbol of unselfish enjoyment. It is, however, dangerous to push speculations of this kind to the very verge of possibility.

The early Roman Christians probably kept Christmas with no special ceremonies. Christ was as yet too close to them. He had not become the glorious creature of their fancy, but was partly an historic being, partly confused in their imagination with reminiscences of pagan deities. As the Good Shepherd, and as Orpheus, we find him painted in the Catacombs; and those who thought of him as God loved to dwell upon his risen greatness more than on the idyl of his birth. To them his entry upon

earth seemed less a subject of rejoicing than his opening of the heavens; they suffered and looked forward to a future happiness; they would not seem to make this world permanent by sharing its gladness with the heathens. Theirs, in truth, was a religion of hope and patience, not of triumphant recollection or of present joyfulness.

The Northern converts of the early Church added more to the peculiar character of our Christmas. Who can tell what pagan rites were half sanctified by their association with that season, or how much of our cheerfulness belonged to heathen orgies and the banquets of grim, warlike gods? Certainly nothing strikes one more in reading Scandinavian poetry than the strange mixture of pagan and Christian sentiments which it presents. For though the missionaries of the Church did all they could to wean away the minds of men from their old superstitions, yet, wiser than their modern followers, they saw that some things might remain untouched, and that even the great outlines of the Christian faith might be adapted to the habits of the people whom they studied to convert. Thus, on the one hand they destroyed the old temples one by one, and called the idols by the name of devils, and strove to obliterate the songs which sang great deeds of bloody gods and heroes; while on the other they taught the Northern sea-kings that Jesus was a prince surrounded by twelve dukes who conquered all the world. Besides, they left the days of the week to their old patrons. It is certain that the imagination of the people preserved more of heathendom than even such missionaries could approve—mixing up the deeds of the Christian saints with old heroic legends; seeing Balder's beauty in Christ and the strength of Thor in Samson; attributing magic to St. John; swearing, as of old, bloody oaths in God's name over the gilded boar's-head; burning the yule-log, and cutting sacred boughs to grace their new-built churches.

The songs of choirs and sound of holy bells and superstitious reverence for the mass began to tell upon the people; and soon the echo of their old religion only swelled upon the ear at intervals, attaching itself to times of more than usual sanctity. Christmas was one of these times, and the old faith threw around its celebration a fantastic light. Many customs of the genial pagan life remained; they seemed harmless when the sense of joy was Christian. The Druid's mistletoe graced the church porches of England and of France, and no blood lingered on its berries. Christmas thus became a time of extraordinary mystery. The people loved it as connecting their old life with the new religion, perhaps unconsciously, though every one might feel that Christmas was no common Christian feast. On its eve strange wonders happened—the thorn that sprang at Glastonbury from the sacred crown which Joseph brought with him from Palestine when Avalon was still an island blossomed on that day. The Cornish miners seemed to hear the sound of singing men arise from submerged churches by the shore, and others said that bells beneath the ground where villages had been, chimed yearly on that eve. No evil thing had power, as Marcellus in *Hamlet* tells us, and the bird of dawning crowed the whole night through. One might multiply folk-lore about the sanctity of Christmas, but enough has been said to show that round it lingered long the legendary spirit of old paganism. It is not to Jews or Greeks or Romans only that we owe our ancient Christmas fancies, but also to those half-heathen ancestors who lovingly looked back to Odin's days and held the old while they embraced the new.

Let us imagine Christmas Day in a mediæval town of Northern England. The cathedral is only partly finished. Its nave and transepts are the work of Norman architects, but the choir has been destroyed in order to be rebuilt by more graceful designers and more skilful hands. The old city is full of craftsmen

assembled to complete the church. Some have come, as a religious duty, to work off their tale of sins by bodily labor. Some are animated by a love of art—simple men who might have rivalled with the Greeks in ages of more cultivation. Others, again, are well-known carvers brought for hire from distant towns and countries beyond the sea. But to-day, and for some days past, the sound of hammer and chisel has been silent in the choir. Monks have bustled about the nave, dressing it up with holly-boughs and bushes of yew, and preparing a stage for the sacred play they are going to exhibit on the feast-day. Christmas is not like Corpus Christi, and now the market-place stands inches deep in snow, so that the Miracles must be enacted beneath a roof instead of in the open air. And what place so appropriate as the cathedral, where poor people may have warmth and shelter while they see the show? Besides, the gloomy old church, with its windows darkened by the falling snow, lends itself to candle-light effects that will enhance the splendor of the scene. Everything is ready. The incense of morning mass yet lingers round the altar. The voice of the friar, who told the people from the pulpit the story of Christ's birth, has hardly ceased to echo. Time has just been given for a mid-day dinner, and for the shepherds and farm lads to troop in from the country-side. The monks are ready at the wooden stage to draw its curtain, and all the nave is full of eager faces. There you may see the smith and carpenter, the butcher's wife, the country priest, and the gray-cowled friar. Scores of workmen, whose home the cathedral for the time is made, are also here, and you may know the artists by their thoughtful foreheads and keen eyes. That young monk carved Madonna and her Son above the southern porch. Beside him stands the master-mason, whose strong arms have hewn gigantic images of prophets and apostles for the pinnacles outside the choir; and the little man with cunning eyes between the

two is he who cuts such quaint hobgoblins for the gargoyles. He has a vein of satire in him, and his humor overflows into the stone. Many and many a grim beast and hideous head has he hidden among vine-leaves and trellis-work upon the porches. Those who know him well are loath to anger him, for fear their sons and sons' sons should laugh at them forever caricatured in solid stone.

Hark! there sounds the bell. The curtain is drawn, and the candles blaze brightly round the wooden stage. What is this first scene? We have God in Heaven, dressed like a pope with triple crown, and attended by his court of angels. They sing and toss up censers till he lifts his hand and speaks. In a long Latin speech he unfolds the order of creation and his will concerning man. At the end of it up leaps an ugly buffoon, in goatskin, with rams' horns upon his head. Some children begin to cry; but the older people laugh, for this is the Devil, the clown and comic character, who talks their common tongue, and has no reverence before the very throne of Heaven. He asks leave to plague men, and receives it; then, with many a curious caper, he goes down to Hell, beneath the stage. The angels sing and toss their censers as before, and the first scene closes to a sound of organs. The next is more conventional, in spite of some grotesque incidents. It represents the Fall; the monks hurry over it quickly, as a tedious but necessary prelude to the birth of Christ. That is the true Christmas part of the ceremony, and it is understood that the best actors and most beautiful dresses are to be reserved for it. The builders of the choir in particular are interested in the coming scenes, since one of their number has been chosen, for his handsome face and tenor voice, to sing the angel's part. He is a young fellow of nineteen, but his beard is not yet grown, and long hair hangs down upon his shoulders. A chorister of the cathedral, his younger brother, will act the Virgin Mary. At last the curtain is drawn.

We see a cottage-room, dimly lighted by a lamp, and Mary spinning near her bedside. She sings a country air, and goes on working, till a rustling noise is heard, more light is thrown upon the stage, and a glorious creature, in white raiment, with broad golden wings, appears. He bears a lily, and cries, "Ave Maria, Gratia Plena!" She does not answer, but stands confused, with down-dropped eyes and timid mien. Gabriel rises from the ground and comforts her, and sings aloud his message of glad tidings. Then Mary gathers courage, and, kneeling in her turn, thanks God; and when the angel and his radiance disappears, she sings the song of the Magnificat, clearly and simply, in the darkened room. Very soft and silver sounds this hymn through the great church. The women kneel, and children are hushed as by a lullaby. But some of the hinds and 'prentice-lads begin to think it rather dull. They are not sorry when the next scene opens with a sheepfold and a little camp-fire. Unmistakable bleatings issue from the fold, and five or six common fellows are sitting round the blazing wood. One might fancy they had stepped straight from the church floor to the stage, so natural do they look. Besides, they call themselves by common names—Colin and Tom Lie-a-bed and Nimble Dick. Many a round laugh wakes echoes in the church when these shepherds stand up, and hold debate about a stolen sheep. Tom Lie-a-bed has nothing to remark but that he is very sleepy, and does not want to go in search of it to-night; Colin cuts jokes, and throws out shrewd suspicions that Dick knows something of the matter; but Dick is sly, and keeps them off the scent, although a few of his asides reveal to the audience that he is the real thief. While they are thus talking, silence falls upon the shepherds. Soft music from the church organ breathes, and they appear to fall asleep.

The stage is now quite dark, and for a few moments the aisles echo only to the dying melody. When, behold, a ray of light is

seen, and splendor grows around the stage from hidden candles, and in the glory Gabriel appears upon a higher platform made to look like clouds. The shepherds wake in confusion, striving to shelter their eyes from this unwonted brilliancy. But Gabriel waves his lily, spreads his great gold wings, and bids good cheer with clarion voice. The shepherds fall to worship, and suddenly round Gabriel there gathers a choir of angels, and a song of "Gloria in Excelsis" to the sound of a deep organ is heard far off. From distant aisles it swells, and seems to come from heaven. Through a long resonant fugue the glory flies, and as it ceases with complex conclusion, the lights die out, the angels disappear, and Gabriel fades into the darkness. Still the shepherds kneel, rustically chanting a carol half in Latin, half in English, which begins "In dulci Jubilo." The people know it well, and when the chorus rises with "Ubi sunt gaudia?" its wild melody is caught by voices up and down the nave. This scene makes deep impression upon many hearts; for the beauty of Gabriel is rare, and few who see him in his angel's dress would know him for the lad who daily carves his lilies and broad water-flags about the pillars of the choir. To that simple audience he interprets Heaven, and little children will see him in their dreams. Dark winter nights and awful forests will be trodden by his feet, made musical by his melodious voice, and parted by the rustling of his wings. The youth himself may return to-morrow to the workman's blouse and chisel, but his memory lives in many minds and may form a part of Christmas for the fancy of men as yet unborn.

The next drawing of the curtain shows us the stable of Bethlehem crowned by its star. There kneels Mary, and Joseph leans upon his staff. The ox and ass are close at hand, and Jesus lies in jewelled robes on straw within the manger. To right and left bow the shepherds, worshipping in dumb show, while voices from behind chant a solemn hymn. In the midst of the melody is

heard a flourish of trumpets, and heralds step upon the stage, followed by the three crowned kings. They have come from the far East, led by the star. The song ceases, while drums and fifes and trumpets play a stately march. The kings pass by, and do obeisance one by one. Each gives some costly gift; each doffs his crown and leaves it at the Saviour's feet. Then they retire to a distance and worship in silence like the shepherds. Again the angel's song is heard, and while it dies away the curtain closes and the lights are put out.

The play is over, and evening has come. The people must go from the warm church into the frozen snow, and crunch their homeward way beneath the moon. But in their minds they carry a sense of light and music and unearthly loveliness. Not a scene of this day's pageant will be lost. It grows within them and creates the poetry of Christmas. Nor must we forget the sculptors who listen to the play. We spoke of them minutely, because these mysteries sank deep into their souls and found a way into their carvings on the cathedral walls. The monk who made Madonna by the southern porch will remember Gabriel, and place him bending low in lordly salutation by her side. The painted glass of the chapter-house will glow with fiery choirs of angels learned by heart that night. And who does not know the mocking devils and quaint satyrs that the humorous sculptor will carve among his fruits and flowers? Some of the misereres of the stalls still bear portraits of the shepherd thief, and of the ox and ass who blinked so blindly when the kings, by torchlight, brought their dazzling gifts. Truly these old miracle-plays and the carved work of cunning hands that they inspired are worth to us more than all the delicate creations of Italian pencils. Our homely Northern churches still retain, for the child who reads their bosses and their sculptured fronts, more Christmas poetry than we can find in Fra Angelico's devoutness or the liveliness of Giotto. Not that South-

ern artists have done nothing for our Christmas. Cimabue's gigantic angels at Assisi, and the radiant seraphs of Raphael or of Signorelli, were seen by Milton in his Italian journey. He gazed in Romish churches on graceful Nativities, into which Angelico and Credi threw their simple souls. How much they tinged his fancy we cannot say. But what we know of heavenly hierarchies we later men have learned from Milton; and what he saw he spoke, and what he spoke in sounding verse lives for us now and sways our reason, and controls our fancy, and makes fine art of high theology.

Thus have I attempted rudely to recall a scene of mediæval Christmas. To understand the domestic habits of that age is not so easy, though one can fancy how the barons in their halls held Christmas, with the boar's head and the jester and the great yule-log. On the dais sat lord and lady, waited on by knight and squire and page; but down the long hall feasted yeomen and hinds and men-at-arms. Little remains to us of those days, and we have outworn their jollity. It is really from the Elizabethan poets that our sense of old-fashioned festivity arises. They lived at the end of one age and the beginning of another. Though born to inaugurate the new era, they belonged by right of association and sympathy to the period that was fleeting fast away. This enabled them to represent the poetry of past and present. Old customs and old states of feeling, when they are about to perish, pass into the realm of art. For art is like a flower, which consummates the plant and ends its growth, while it translates its nature into loveliness. Thus Dante and Lorenzetti and Orcagna enshrined mediæval theology in works of imperishable beauty, and Shakespeare and his fellows made immortal the life and manners that were decaying in their own time. Men do not reflect upon their mode of living till they are passing from one state to another, and the consciousness of art implies a beginning of new things. Let one who wishes to appreciate the ideal of an English Christmas

read Shakespeare's song, "When icicles hang by the wall;" and if he knows some old gray grange, far from the high-road, among pastures, with a river flowing near, and cawing rooks in elm-trees by the garden-wall, let him place Dick and Joan and Marian there.

We have heard so much of pensioners, and barons of beef, and yule-logs, and bay, and rosemary, and holly boughs cut upon the hill-side, and crab-apples bobbing in the wassail bowl, and masques and mummers, and dancers on the rushes, that we need not here describe a Christmas-eve in olden times. Indeed, this last half of the nineteenth century is weary of the worn-out theme. But one characteristic of the age of Elizabeth may be mentioned—that is, its love of music. Fugued melodies, sung by voices without instruments, were much in vogue. We call them madrigals, and their half-merry, half-melancholy music yet recalls the time when England had her gift of art, when she needed not to borrow of Marenzio and Palestrina, when her Wilbyes and her Morlands and her Dowlands won the praise of Shakespeare and the court. We hear the echo of those songs; and in some towns at Christmas or the New-Year old madrigals still sound in praise of Oriana and of Phyllis and the country life. What are called "waits" are but a poor travesty of those well-sung Elizabethan carols. We turn in our beds half-pitying, half-angered by harsh voices that quaver senseless ditties in the fog, or by tuneless fiddles playing popular airs without propriety or interest.

It is a strange mixture of picturesquely blended elements which the Elizabethan age presents. We see it afar off like the meeting of a hundred streams that grow into a river. We are sailing on the flood long after it has shrunk into a single tide, and the banks are dull and tame, and the all-absorbing ocean is before us. Yet sometimes we hear a murmur of the distant fountains, and Christmas is a day on which for some the many waters of the age of great Elizabeth sound clearest.

The age which followed was not poetical. The Puritans restrained festivity and art, and hated music. Yet from this period stands out the hymn of Milton, written when he was a youth, but bearing promise of his later muse. At one time, as we read it, we seem to be looking on a picture by some old Italian artist. But no picture can give Milton's music or make the "base of heaven's deep organ blow." Here he touches new associations, and reveals the realm of poetry which it remains for later times to traverse. Milton felt the true sentiment of Northern Christmas when he opened his poem with the "winter wild," in defiance of historical probability, and what the French call local coloring. Nothing shows how wholly we people of the North have appropriated Christmas, and made it a creature of our own imagination, more than this dwelling on winds and snows and bitter frosts, so alien from the fragrant nights of Palestine. But Milton's hymn is like a symphony, embracing many thoughts and periods of varying melody. The music of the seraphim brings to his mind the age of gold, and that suggests the judgment and the redemption of the world. Satan's kingdom fails, the false gods go forth, Apollo leaves his rocky throne, and all the dim Phœnician and Egyptian deities, with those that classic fancy fabled, troop away like ghosts into the darkness. What a swell of stormy sound is in those lines! It recalls the very voice of Pan, which went abroad upon the waters when Christ died, and all the utterances of God on earth, feigned in Delphian shrines, or truly spoken on the sacred hills, were mute forever.

After Milton came the age which, of all others, is the prosiest in our history. We cannot find much novelty of interest added to Christmas at this time. But there is one piece of poetry that somehow or another seems to belong to the reign of Anne and of the Georges—the poetry of bells. Great civic corporations reigned in those days; churchwardens tyrannized and were rich; and

many a goodly chime of bells they hung in our old church-steeple. Let us go into the square room of the belfry, where the clock ticks all day, and the long ropes hang dangling down, with fur upon their hemp for ringers' hands above the socket set for ringers' feet. There we may read long lists of gilded names, recording mountainous bob-majors, rung a century ago, with special praise to him who pulled the tenor-bell, year after year, until he died, and left it to his son. The art of bell-ringing is profound, and requires a long apprenticeship. Even now, in some old cities, the ringers form a guild and mystery. Suppose it to be Christmas-eve in the year 1772. It is now a quarter before twelve, and the sexton has unlocked the church-gates and set the belfry-door ajar. Candles are lighted in the room above, and jugs of beer stand ready for the ringers. Up they bustle one by one, and listen to the tickings of the clock that tells the passing minutes. At last it gives a click; and now they throw off coat and waistcoat, strap their girdles tighter round the waist, and each holds his rope in readiness. Twelve o'clock strikes, and forth across the silent city go the clamorous chimes. The steeple rocks and reels, and far away the night is startled. Damp, turbulent west winds, rushing from the distant sea, and swirling up the inland valleys, catch the sound, and toss it to and fro, and bear it by gusts and snatches to watchers far away, upon bleak moorlands and the brows of woody hills. Is there not something dim and strange in the thought of these eight men meeting, in the heart of a great city, in the narrow belfry-room, to stir a mighty sound that shall announce to listening ears miles, miles away, the birth of a new day, and tell to dancers, mourners, students, sleepers, and perhaps to dying men, that Christ is born?

Let this association suffice for the time. And of our own Christmas so much has been said and sung by better voices that we may leave it to the feelings and the memories of those who

read the fireside tales of Dickens, and are happy in their homes. The many elements which I have endeavored to recall mix all of them in the Christmas of the present, partly, no doubt, under the form of vague and obscure sentiment, partly as time-honored reminiscences, partly as a portion of our own life. But there is one phase of poetry which we enjoy more fully than any previous age. That is music. Music is of all the arts the youngest, and of all can free herself most readily from symbols. A fine piece of music moves before us like a living passion, which needs no form or color, no interpreting associations, to convey its strong but indistinct significance. Each man there finds his soul revealed to him, and enabled to assume a cast of feeling in obedience to the changeful sound. In this manner all our Christmas thoughts and emotions have been gathered up for us by Handel in his drama of the *Messiah*. To Englishmen it is almost as well known and necessary as the Bible. But only one who has heard its pastoral episode performed year after year from childhood in the hushed cathedral, where pendent lamps or sconces make the gloom of aisle and choir and airy column half intelligible, can invest this music with long associations of accumulated awe. To his mind it brings a scene at midnight of hills clear in the starlight of the East, with white flocks scattered on the down. The breath of winds that come and go, the bleating of the sheep, with now and then a tinkling bell, and now and then the voice of an awakened shepherd, is all that breaks the deep repose. Overhead shimmer the bright stars, and low to west lies the moon, not pale and sickly (he dreams) as in our North, but golden, full, and bathing distant towers and tall aerial palms with floods of light. Such is a child's vision, begotten by the music of the symphony; and when he wakes from trance at its low silver close, the dark cathedral seems glowing with a thousand angel faces, and all the air is tremulous with angel wings. Then follow the solitary treble voice and the swift chorus.

ANTINOUS.

VISITORS to picture and sculpture galleries are haunted by the forms of two handsome young men—Sebastian and Antinous. Both were saints: the one of decadent Paganism, the other of mythologizing Christianity. According to the popular beliefs to which they owed their canonization, both suffered death in the bloom of earliest manhood for the faith that burned in them. There is, however, this difference between the two—that whereas Sebastian is a shadowy creature of the pious fancy, Antinous preserves a marked and unmistakable personality. All his statues are distinguished by unchanging characteristics. The pictures of Sebastian vary according to the ideal of adolescent beauty conceived by each successive artist. In the frescos of Perugino and Luini he shines with the pale, pure light of saintliness. On the canvas of Sodoma he reproduces the voluptuous charm of youthful Bacchus with so much of anguish in his martyred features as may serve to heighten his dæmonic fascination. On the richer panels of the Venetian masters he glows with a flame of earthly passion aspiring heavenward. Under Guido's hand he is a model of mere carnal comeliness. And so forth through the whole range of the Italian painters. We know Sebastian only by his arrows. The case is very different with Antinous. Depicted under diverse attributes—as Hermes of the wrestling-ground, as Aristæus or Vertumnus, as Dionysus, as Ganymede, as Herakles, or as a god of ancient Egypt—his individuality is always prominent. No metamorphosis of divinity can change the lineaments he wore on earth. And this difference, so marked in the artistic

presentation of the two saints, is no less striking in their several histories. The legend of Sebastian tells us nothing to be relied upon, except that he was a Roman soldier converted to the Christian faith, and martyred. In spite of the perplexity and mystery that involve the death of Antinous in impenetrable gloom, he is a true historic personage, no phantom of myth, but a man as real as Hadrian, his master.

Antinous, as he appears in sculpture, is a young man of eighteen or nineteen years, almost faultless in his form. His beauty is not of a pure Greek type. Though perfectly proportioned and developed by gymnastic exercises to the true athletic fulness, his limbs are round and florid, suggesting the possibility of early over-ripeness. The muscles are not trained to sinewy firmness, but yielding and elastic; the chest is broad and singularly swelling; and the shoulders are placed so far back from the thorax that the breasts project beyond them in a massive arch. It has been asserted that one shoulder is slightly lower than the other. Some of the busts seem to justify this statement; but the appearance is due, probably, to the different position of the two arms, one of which, if carried out, would be lifted and the other be depressed. The legs and arms are modelled with exquisite grace of outline; yet they do not show that readiness for active service which is noticeable in the statues of the Meleager, the Apoxyomenos, or the Belvedere Hermes. The whole body combines Greek beauty of structure with something of Oriental voluptuousness. The same fusion of diverse elements may be traced in the head. It is not too large, though more than usually broad, and is nobly set upon a massive throat, slightly inclined forward, as though this posture were habitual; the hair lies thick in clusters, which only form curls at the tips. The forehead is low and somewhat square; the eyebrows are level, of a peculiar shape, and very thick, converging so closely as almost to meet above the deep-cut eyes.

The nose is straight, but blunter than is consistent with the Greek ideal. Both cheeks and chin are delicately formed, but fuller than a severe taste approves: one might trace in their rounded contours either a survival of infantine innocence and immaturity, or else the sign of rapidly approaching over-bloom. The mouth is one of the loveliest ever carved; but here, again, the blending of the Greek and Oriental types is visible. The lips, half parted, seem to pout; and the distance between mouth and nostrils is exceptionally short. The undefinable expression of the lips, together with the weight of the brows and slumberous half-closed eyes, gives a look of sulkiness or voluptuousness to the whole face. This, I fancy, is the first impression which the portraits of Antinous produce; and Shelley has well conveyed it by placing the two following phrases, "eager and impassioned tenderness" and "effeminate sullenness," in close juxtaposition.* But after long familiarity with the whole range of Antinous's portraits, and after study of his life, we are brought to read the peculiar expression of his face and form somewhat differently. A prevailing melancholy, sweetness of temperament overshadowed by resignation, brooding revery, the innocence of youth touched and saddened by a calm resolve or an accepted doom—such are the sentences we form to give distinctness to a still vague and uncertain impression. As we gaze, Virgil's lines upon the young Marcellus recur to our mind: what seemed sullen, becomes mournful; the unmistakable voluptuousness is transfigured in tranquillity.

After all is said and written, the statues of Antinous do not render up their secret. Like some of the Egyptian gods with whom he was associated, he remains for us a sphinx, secluded in the shade of a "mild mystery." His soul, like the Harpocrates he personated, seems to hold one finger on closed lips, in token of

* Fragment, *The Coliseum*.

eternal silence. One thing, however, is certain. We have before us no figment of the artistic imagination, but a real youth of incomparable beauty, just as nature made him, with all the inscrutableness of undeveloped character, with all the pathos of a most untimely doom, with the almost imperceptible imperfections that render choice reality more permanently charming than the ideal. It has been disputed whether the Antinous statues are portraits or idealized works of inventive art; and it is usually conceded that the sculptors of Hadrian's age were not able to produce a new ideal type. Critics, therefore, like Helbig and Overbeck, arrive at the conclusion that Antinous was one of nature's masterpieces, modelled in bronze, marble, and granite with almost flawless technical dexterity. Without attaching too much weight to this kind of criticism, it is well to find the decisions of experts in harmony with the instincts of simple observers. Antinous is as real as any man who ever sat for his portrait to a modern sculptor.

But who was Antinous, and what is known of him? He was a native of Bithynium or Claudiopolis, a Greek town claiming to have been a colony from Arcadia, which was situated near the Sangarius, in the Roman province of Bithynia; therefore he may have had pure Hellenic blood in his veins, or, what is more probable, his ancestry may have been hybrid between the Greek immigrants and the native populations of Asia Minor. Antinous was probably born in the first decade of the second century of our era. About his youth and education we know nothing. He first appears upon the scene of the world's history as Hadrian's friend. Whether the emperor met with him during his travels in Asia Minor, whether he found him among the students of the University at Athens, or whether the boy had been sent to Rome in his childhood, must remain matter of the merest conjecture. We do not even know for certain whether Antinous was free or

a slave. The report that he was one of the emperor's pages rests upon the testimony of Hegesippus, quoted by a Christian father, and cannot, therefore, be altogether relied upon. It receives, however, some confirmation from the fact that Antinous is more than once represented in the company of Hadrian and Trajan in a page's hunting-dress upon the bass-reliefs which adorn the Arch of Constantine. The so-called Antinous-Castor of the Villa Albani is probably of a similar character. Winckelmann, who adopted the tradition as trustworthy, pointed out the similarity between the portraits of Antinous and some lines in Phædrus, which describe a curly-haired *atriensis*. If Antinous took the rank of *atriensis* in the imperial *pædagogium*, his position would have been, to say the least, respectable; for to these upper servants was committed the charge of the *atrium*, where the Romans kept their family archives, portraits, and works of art. Yet he must have quitted this kind of service some time before his death, since we find him in the company of Hadrian upon one of those long journeys in which an *atriensis* would have had no *atrium* to keep. By the time of Hadrian's visit to Egypt, Antinous had certainly passed into the closest relationship with his imperial master; and what we know of the emperor's inclination towards literary and philosophical society perhaps justifies the belief that the youth he admitted to his friendship had imbibed Greek culture, and had been initiated into those cloudy metaphysics which amused the leisure of semi-Oriental thinkers in the last age of decaying paganism.

It was a moment in the history of the human mind when East and West were blending their traditions to form the husk of Christian creeds and the fantastic visions of Neo-Platonism. Rome herself had received with rapture the strange rites of Nilotic and of Syrian superstition. Alexandria was the forge of fanciful imaginations, the majority of which were destined to pass

like vapors and leave not a wrack behind, while a few fastened with the force of dogma on the conscience of awakening Christendom. During Hadrian's reign it was still uncertain which among the many hybrid products of that motley age would live and flourish; and the emperor, we know, dreamed fondly of reviving the cults and restoring the splendor of degenerate Hellas. At the same time he was not averse to the more mystic rites of Egypt: in his villa at Tivoli he built a Serapeum, and named one of its quarters Canopus. What part Antinous may have taken in the projects of his friend and master we know not; yet, when we come to consider the circumstances of his death, it may not be superfluous to have thus touched upon the intellectual conditions of the world in which he lived. The mixed blood of the boy, born and bred in a Greek city near the classic ground of Dindymean rites, and his beauty, blended of Hellenic and Eastern qualities, may also not unprofitably be remembered. In such a youth, nurtured between Greece and Asia, admitted to the friendship of an emperor for whom Neo-Hellenism was a life's dream in the midst of grave State cares, influenced by the dark and symbolical creeds of a dimly apprehended East, might there not have lurked some spark of enthusiasm combining the impulses of Atys and Aristogeiton, pathetic even in its inefficiency when judged by the light of modern knowledge, but heroic at that moment in its boundless vista of great deeds to be accomplished?

After journeying through Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia, Hadrian, attended by Antinous, came to Egypt. He there restored the tomb of Pompey, near Pelusium, with great magnificence, and shortly afterwards embarked from Alexandria upon the Nile, proceeding on his journey through Memphis into the Thebaid. When he had arrived near an ancient city named Besa, on the right bank of the river, he lost his friend. Antinous was drowned in the Nile. He had thrown himself, it was be-

lieved, into the water; seeking thus by a voluntary death to substitute his own life for Hadrian's, and to avert predicted perils from the Roman Empire. What these perils were, and whether Hadrian was ill, or whether an oracle had threatened him with approaching calamity, we do not know. Even supposition is at fault, because the date of the event is still uncertain, some authorities placing Hadrian's Egyptian journey in the year 122, and others in the year 130 A.D. Of the two dates, the second seems the more probable. We are left to surmise that if the emperor was in danger, the recent disturbances which followed a new discovery of Apis may have exposed him to fanatical conspiracy. The same doubt affects an ingenious conjecture that rumors which reached the Roman court of a new rising in Judæa had disturbed the emperor's mind, and led to the belief that he was on the verge of a mysterious doom. He had pacified the empire and established its administration on a solid basis. Yet the revolt of the indomitable Jews—more dreaded since the days of Titus than any other perturbation of the imperial economy—would have been enough, especially in Egypt, to engender general uneasiness. However this may have been, the grief of the emperor, intensified either by gratitude or remorse, led to the immediate canonization of Antinous. The city where he died was rebuilt, and named after him. His worship as a hero and as a god spread far and wide throughout the provinces of the Mediterranean. A new star which appeared about the time of his decease was supposed to be his soul received into the company of the immortals. Medals were struck in his honor, and countless works of art were produced to make his memory undying. Great cities wore wreaths of red lotos on his feast-day in commemoration of the manner of his death. Public games were celebrated in his honor at the city Antinoë, and also in Arcadian Mantinea. This canonization may probably have taken place in the fourteenth year of Hadrian's

reign, A.D. 130.* Antinous continued to be worshipped until the reign of Valentinian.

Thus far I have told a simple story, as though the details of the youth's last days were undisputed. Still we are as yet but on the threshold of the subject. All that we have any right to take for uncontested is that Antinous passed from this life near the city of Besa, called thereafter Antinoopolis or Antinoë. Whether he was drowned by accident, whether he drowned himself in order to save Hadrian by vicarious suffering, or whether Hadrian sacrificed him in order to extort the secrets of fate from blood-propitiated deities, remains a question buried in the deepest gloom. With a view to throwing such light as is possible upon the matter, we must proceed to summon in their order the most trustworthy authorities among the ancients.

Dion Cassius takes precedence. In compiling his life of Hadrian, he had beneath his eyes the emperor's own *Commentaries*, published under the name of the freedman Phlegon. We, therefore, learn from him at least what the friend of Antinous wished the world to know about his death; and though this does not go for much, since Hadrian is himself an accused person in the suit before us, yet the whole Roman Empire may be said to have accepted his account, and based on it a pious cult that held its own through the next three centuries of growing Christianity.

* Overbeck, Hausrath, and Mommsen, following apparently the conclusions arrived at by Flemmer in his work on Hadrian's journeys, place it in 130 A.D. This would leave an interval of only eight years between the deaths of Antinous and Hadrian. It may here be observed that two medals of Antinous, referred by Rasche with some hesitation to the Egyptian series, bear the dates of the eighth and ninth years of Hadrian's reign. If these coins are genuine, and if we accept Flemmer's conclusions, they must have been struck in the lifetime of Antinous. Neither of them represents Antinous with the insignia of deity: one gives the portrait of Hadrian upon the reverse.

Dion, in the abstract of his history compiled by Xiphilinus, speaks then to this effect: "In Egypt he also built the city named after Antinous. Now Antinous was a native of Bithynium, a city of Bithynia, which we also call Claudiopolis. He was Hadrian's favorite, and he died in Egypt: whether by having fallen into the Nile, as Hadrian writes, or by having been sacrificed, as the truth was. For Hadrian, as I have said, was in general overmuch given to superstitious subtleties, and practised all kinds of sorceries and magic arts. At any rate he so honored Antinous, whether because of the love he felt for him, or because he died voluntarily, since a willing victim was needed for his purpose, that he founded a city in the place where he met this fate, and called it after him, and dedicated statues, or rather images, of him in, so to speak, the whole inhabited world. Lastly, he affirmed that a certain star which he saw was the star of Antinous, and listened with pleasure to the myths invented by his companions about this star having really sprung from the soul of his favorite, and having then for the first time appeared. For which things he was laughed at."

We may now hear what Spartian, in his *Vita Hadriani*, has to say: "He lost his favorite, Antinous, while sailing on the Nile, and lamented him like a woman. About Antinous reports vary, for some say that he devoted his life for Hadrian, while others hint what his condition seems to prove, as well as Hadrian's excessive inclination to luxury. Some Greeks, at the instance of Hadrian, canonized him, asserting that oracles were given by him, which Hadrian himself is supposed to have made up."

In the third place comes Aurelius Victor: "Others maintain that this sacrifice of Antinous was both pious and religious, for when Hadrian was wishing to prolong his life, and the magicians required a voluntary vicarious victim, they say that, upon the refusal of all others, Antinous offered himself."

These are the chief authorities. In estimating them we must remember that, though Dion Cassius wrote less than a century after the event narrated, he has come down to us merely in fragments and in the epitome of a Byzantine of the twelfth century, when everything that could possibly be done to discredit the worship of Antinous and to blacken the memory of Hadrian had been attempted by the Christian fathers. On the other hand, Spartianus and Aurelius Victor compiled their histories at too distant a date to be of first-rate value. Taking the three reports together, we find that antiquity differed about the details of Antinous's death. Hadrian himself averred that his friend was drowned; and it was surmised that he had drowned himself in order to prolong his master's life. The courtiers, however, who had scoffed at Hadrian's fondness for his favorite, and had laughed to see his sorrow for his death, somewhat illogically came to the conclusion that Antinous had been immolated by the emperor, either because a victim was needed to prolong his life, or because some human sacrifice was required in order to complete a dark, mysterious, magic rite. Dion, writing not very long after the event, believed that Antinous had been immolated for some such purpose with his own consent. Spartian, who wrote at the distance of more than a century, felt uncertain about the question of self-devotion; but Aurelius Victor, following after the interval of another century, unhesitatingly adopted Dion's view, and gave it a fresh color. This opinion he summarized in a compact, authoritative form, upon which we may perhaps found an assumption that the belief in Antinous as a self-devoted victim had been gradually growing through two centuries.

There are, therefore, three hypotheses to be considered. The first is that Antinous died an accidental death by drowning; the second is that Antinous, in some way or another, gave his life

willingly for Hadrian's; the third is that Hadrian ordered his immolation in the performance of magic rites.

For the first of the three hypotheses we have the authority of Hadrian himself, as quoted by Dion. The simple words *εἰς τὸν Νεῖλον ἐκπεσὼν* imply no more than accidental death; and yet, if the emperor had believed the story of his favorite's self-devotion, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have recorded it in his *Memoirs*. Accepting this view of the case, we must refer the deification of Antinous wholly to Hadrian's affection; and the tales of his *devotio* may have been invented partly to flatter the emperor's grief, partly to explain its violence to the Roman world. This hypothesis seems, indeed, by far the most natural of the three; and if we could strip the history of Antinous of its mysterious and mythic elements, it is rational to believe that we should find his death a simple accident. Yet our authorities prove that writers of history among the ancients wavered between the two other theories of (1) Self-devotion and (2) Immolation, with a bias towards the latter. These, then, have now to be considered with some attention. Both, it may parenthetically be observed, relieve Antinous from a moral stigma, since in either case a pure untainted victim was required.

If we accept the former of the two remaining hypotheses, we can understand how love and gratitude, together with sorrow, led Hadrian to canonize Antinous. If we accept the latter, Hadrian's sorrow itself becomes inexplicable; and we must attribute the foundation of Antinoë and the deification of Antinous to remorse. It may be added, while balancing these two solutions of the problem, that cynical sophists like Hadrian's Græculi were likely to have put the worst construction on the emperor's passion, and to have invented the worst stories concerning the favorite's death. To perpetuate these calumnious reports was the real interest of the Christian apologists, who not unnaturally thought it scanda-

lous that a handsome page should be deified. Thus, at first sight, the balance of probability inclines towards the former of the two solutions, while the second may be rejected as based upon court-gossip and religious animosity. Attention may also again be called to the fact that Hadrian ventured to publish an account of Antinous quite inconsistent with what Dion chose to call the truth, and that virtuous emperors like the Antonines did not interfere with a cult which, had it been paid to the mere victim of Hadrian's passion and his superstition, would have been an infamy even in Rome. Moreover, that cult was not, like the creations of the impious emperors, forgotten or destroyed by public acclamation. It took root and flourished apparently, as we shall see, because it satisfied some craving of the popular religious sense, and because the people believed that this man had died for his friend. It will not, however, do to dismiss the two hypotheses so lightly.

The alternative of self-devotion presents itself under a double aspect. Antinous may either have committed suicide by drowning with the intention of prolonging the emperor's life, or he may have offered himself as a voluntary victim to the magicians, who required a sacrifice for a similar purpose. Spartian's brief phrase, *aliis eum devotum pro Hadriano*, may seem to point to the first form of self-devotion; the testimony of Aurelius Victor clearly supports the second: yet it does not much matter which of the two explanations we adopt. The point is whether Antinous gave his life willingly to save the emperor's, or whether he was murdered for the satisfaction of some superstitious curiosity. It was absolutely necessary that the vicarious victim should make a free and voluntary oblation of himself. That the notion of vicarious suffering was familiar to the ancients is sufficiently attested by the phrases ἀντιψυχοί, ἀντανέροι, and *hostia succidanea*. We find traces of it in the legend of Alcestis, who died for Admetus, and

of Cheiron, who took the place of Prometheus in Hades. Suetonius records that in the first days of Caligula's popularity, when he was laboring under dangerous illness, many Romans of both sexes vowed their lives for his recovery in temples of the gods. That this superstition retained a strong hold on the popular imagination in the time of Hadrian is proved by the curious affirmation of Aristides, a contemporary of that emperor. He says that once, when he was ill, a certain Philumene offered her soul for his soul, her body for his body, and that upon his own recovery she died. On the same testimony it appears that her brother Hermes had also died for Aristides. This faith in the efficacy of substitution is persistent in the human race. Not long ago a Christian lady was supposed to have vowed her own life for the prolongation of that of Pope Pius IX., and good Catholics inclined to the belief that the sacrifice had been accepted. We shall see that in the first centuries of Christendom the popular conviction that Antinous had died for Hadrian had brought him into inconvenient rivalry with Christ, whose vicarious suffering was the cardinal point of the new creed.

The alternative of immolation has next to be considered. The question before us here is, Did Hadrian sacrifice Antinous for the satisfaction of a superstitious curiosity, and in the performance of magic rites? Dion Cassius uses the word *ἱεροπονηθεὶς*, and explains it by saying that Hadrian needed a voluntary human victim for the accomplishment of an act of divination in which he was engaged. Both Spartian and Dion speak emphatically of the emperor's proclivities to the black art; and all antiquity agreed about this trait in his character. Ammianus Marcellinus spoke of him as *futurorum sciscitationi nimix deditum*. Tertullian described him as *curiositatum omnium exploratorem*. To multiply such phrases would, however, be superfluous, for they are probably mere repetitions from the text of Dion. That human

victims were used by the Romans of the empire seems certain. Lampridius, in the *Life of Heliogabalus*, records his habit of slaying handsome and noble youths, in order that he might inspect their entrails. Eusebius, in his *Life of Maxentius*, asserts the same of that emperor. *Quum inspiceret exta puerilia, νεογνῶν σπλάγχνα βρέφων διερευνομένου*, are the words used by Lampridius and Eusebius. Justin Martyr speaks of *ἐποπτεύσεις παιδῶν ἀδικοφθόρων*. Caracalla and Julian are credited with similar bloody sacrifices. Indeed, it may be affirmed in general that tyrants have ever been eager to foresee the future and to extort her secrets from Fate, stopping short at no crime in the attempt to quiet a corroding anxiety for their own safety. What we read about Italian despots—Ezzelino da Romano, Sigismondo Malatesta, Filippo Maria Visconti, and Pier Luigi Farnese—throws light upon the practice of their imperial predecessors; while the mysterious murder of the beautiful Astorre Manfredi by the Borgias in Hadrian's Mausoleum has been referred by modern critics of authority to the same unholy curiosity. That Hadrian labored under this moral disease, and that he deliberately used the body of Antinous for *extispicium*, is, I think, Dion's opinion. But are we justified in reckoning Hadrian among these tyrants? That must depend upon our view of his character.

Hadrian was a man in whom the most conflicting qualities were blended. In his youth and through his whole life he was passionately fond of hunting; hardy, simple in his habits, marching bare-headed with his legions through German frost and Nubian heat, sharing the food of his soldiers, and exercising the most rigid military discipline. At the same time he has aptly been described as "the most sumptuous character of antiquity." He filled the cities of the empire with showy buildings, and passed his last years in a kind of classic Munich, where he had constructed imitations of every celebrated monument in Europe. He was so far fond of

nature that, anticipating the most recently developed of modern tastes, he ascended Mount Ætna and the Mons Casius in order to enjoy the spectacle of sunrise. In his villa at Tivoli he indulged a trivial fancy by christening one garden Tempe and another the Elysian Fields; and he had his name carved on the statue of the vocal Memnon with no less gusto than a modern tourist: *Audivi voces divinas*. His memory was prodigious, his eloquence in the Latin language studied and yet forcible, his knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy far from contemptible. He enjoyed the society of sophists and distinguished rhetoricians, and so far affected authorship as to win the unenviable title of *Græculus* in his own lifetime; yet he never neglected State affairs. Owing to his untiring energy and vast capacity for business, he not only succeeded in reorganizing every department of the empire, social, political, fiscal, military, and municipal, but he also held in his own hands the threads of all its complicated machinery. He was strict in matters of routine, and appears to have been almost a martinet among his legions; yet in social intercourse he lived on terms of familiarity with inferiors, combining the graces of elegant conversation with the *bonhomie* of boon companionship, displaying a warm heart to his friends, and using magnificent generosity. He restored the domestic as well as the military discipline of the Roman world; and his code of laws lasted till Justinian. Among many of his useful measures of reform he issued decrees restricting the power of masters over their slaves, and depriving them of their old capital jurisdiction. His biographers find little to accuse him of beyond a singular avidity for fame, addiction to magic arts and luxurious vices; yet they adduce no proof of his having, at any rate before the date of his final retirement to his Tiburtine villa, shared the crimes of a Nero or a Commodus. On the whole, we must recognize in Hadrian a nature of extraordinary energy, capacity for administrative government, and mental

versatility. A certain superficiality, vulgarity, and commonplaceness seems to have been forced upon him by the circumstances of his age, no less than by his special temperament. This quality of the immitigable commonplace is clearly written on his many portraits. Their chief interest consists in a fixed expression of fatigue—as though the man were weary with much seeking and with little finding. In all things he was somewhat of a *dilettante*; and the Nemesis of that sensibility to impressions which distinguishes the *dilettante* came upon him ere he died. He ended his days in an appalling and persistent paroxysm of *ennui*, desiring the death which would not come to his relief.

The whole creative and expansive force of Hadrian's century lay concealed in the despised Christian sect. Art was expiring in a sunset blaze of gorgeous imitation, tasteless grandeur, technical elaboration. Philosophy had become sophistical or mystic; its real life survived only in the phrase "entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren" of the Stoics. Literature was repetitive and scholastic. Tacitus, Suetonius, Plutarch, and Juvenal indeed were living; but their works formed the last great literary triumph of the age. Religion had degenerated under the twofold influences of scepticism and intrusive foreign cults. It was, in truth, an age in which, for a sound heart and manly intellect, their lay no proper choice except between the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius and the Christianity of the Catacombs. All else had passed into shams, unrealities, and visions. Now Hadrian was neither stoical nor Christian, though he so far coquetted with Christianity as to build temples dedicated to no pagan deity, which passed in after-times for unfinished churches. He was a *Græculus*. In that contemptuous epithet, stripping it of its opprobrious significance, we find the real key to his character. In a failing age he lived a restless-minded, many-sided soldier-prince, whose inner hopes and highest aspirations were for Hellas. Hellas, her art, her history,

her myths, her literature, her lovers, her young heroes filled him with enthusiasm. To rebuild her ruined cities, to restore her deities, to revive her golden life of blended poetry and science, to reconstruct her spiritual empire as he had reorganized the Roman world, was Hadrian's dream. It was indeed a dream; one which a far more creative genius than Hadrian's could not have realized.

But now, returning to the two alternatives regarding his friend's death: was this philo-Hellenic emperor the man to have immolated Antinous for *extispicium* and then deified him? Probably not. The discord between this bloody act and subsequent hypocrisy, upon the one hand, and Hadrian's Greek sympathies, upon the other, must be reckoned too strong for even such a dipsychic character as his. There is nothing in either Spartian or Dion to justify the opinion that he was naturally cruel or fantastically deceitful. On the other hand, Hadrian's philo-Hellenic, splendor-loving, somewhat tawdry, fame-desiring nature was precisely of the sort to jump eagerly at the deification of a favorite who had either died a natural death or killed himself to save his master. Hadrian had loved Antinous with a Greek passion in his lifetime. The Roman emperor was half a god. He remembered how Zeus had loved Ganymede, and raised him to Olympus; how Achilles had loved Patroclus, and performed his funeral rites at Troy; how the demigod Alexander had loved Hephæstion, and lifted him into a hero's seat on high. He, Hadrian, would do the like, now that death had robbed him of his comrade. The Roman, who surrounded himself at Tivoli with copies of Greek temples, and who called his garden Tempe, played thus at being Zeus, Achilles, Alexander; and the civilized world humored his whim. Though the sophists scoffed at his real grief and honorable tears, they consecrated his lost favorite, found out a star for him, carved him in breathing brass, and told tales about his sacred flower. Pankrates was entertained in Alexandria at the public cost for his fa-

ble of the lotos; and the lyrist Mesomedes received so liberal a pension for his hymn to Antinous that Antoninus Pius found it needful to curtail it.

After weighing the authorities, considering the circumstances of the age, and estimating Hadrian's character, I am thus led to reject the alternative of immolation. Spartian's own words, *Quem muliebriter flevit*, as well as the subsequent acts of the emperor and the acquiescence of the whole world in the new deity, prove to my mind that in the suggestion of *extispicium* we have one of those covert calumnies which it is impossible to set aside at this distance of time, and which render the history of Roman emperors and popes almost impracticable.

The case, then, stands before us thus: Antinous was drowned in the Nile, near Besa, either by accident, or by voluntary suicide to save his master's life. Hadrian's love for him had been unmeasured, so was his grief. Both of them were genuine; but in the nature of the man there was something artificial. He could not be content to love and grieve alone; he must needs enact the part of Alexander, and realize, if only by a sort of makebelieve, a portion of his Greek ideal. Antinous, the beautiful servant, was to take the place of Ganymede, of Patroclus, of Hephæstion; never mind if Hadrian was a Roman and his friend a Bithynian, and if the love between them, as between an emperor of fifty and a boy of nineteen, had been less than heroic. The opportunity was too fair to be missed; the *rôle* too fascinating to be rejected. The world, in spite of covert sneers, lent itself to the sham, and Antinous became a god.

The uniformly contemptuous tone of antique authorities almost obliges us to rank this deification of Antinous, together with the Tiburtine villa and the dream of a Hellenic Renaissance, among the part-shams, part-enthusiasms of Hadrian's "sumptuous" character. Spartian's account of the consecration, and his hint that

Hadrian composed the oracles delivered at his favorite's tomb; Arrian's letter to the emperor describing the island Leukè and flattering him by an adroit comparison with Achilles; the poem by Panerates mentioned in the *Deipnosophistæ*, which furnished the myth of a new lotos dedicated to Antinous; the invention of the star, and Hadrian's conversations with his courtiers on this subject—all converge to form the belief that something of consciously unreal mingled with this act of apotheosis by imperial decree. Hadrian sought to assuage his grief by paying his favorite illustrious honors after death; he also desired to give the memory of his own love the most congenial and poetical environment, to feed upon it in the daintiest places, and to deck it with the prettiest flowers of fancy. He therefore canonized Antinous, and took measures for disseminating his cult throughout the world, careless of the element of imposture which might seem to mingle with the consecration of his true affection. Hadrian's superficial taste was not offended by the gimcrack quality of the new god; and Antinous was saved from being a merely pinch-beck saint by his own charming personality.

This will not, however, wholly satisfy the conditions of the problem; and we are obliged to ask ourselves whether there was not something in the character of Antinous himself, something divinely inspired and irradiate with spiritual beauty, apparent to his fellows and remembered after his mysterious death, which justified his canonization, and removed it from the region of imperial makebelieve. If this was not the case, if Antinous died like a flower cropped from the seraglio garden of the court-pages, how should the emperor, in the first place, have bewailed him with "unhusbanded passion," and the people afterwards have received him as a god? May it not have been that he was a youth of more than ordinary promise, gifted with intellectual enthusiasms proportioned to his beauty and endowed with something of

Phœbean inspiration, who, had he survived, might have even inaugurated a new age for the world, or have emulated the heroism of Hypatia in a hopeless cause? Was the link between him and Hadrian formed less by the boy's beauty than by his marvelous capacity for apprehending and his fitness for realizing the emperor's Greek dreams? Did the spirit of Neo-Platonism find in him congenial incarnation? At any rate, was there not enough in the then current beliefs about the future of the soul, as abundantly set forth in Plutarch's writings, to justify a conviction that after death he had already passed into the lunar sphere, awaiting the final apotheosis of purged spirits in the sun? These questions may be asked—indeed, they must be asked—for, without suggesting them, we leave the worship of Antinous an almost inexplicable scandal, an almost unintelligible blot on human nature. Unless we ask them, we must be content to echo the coarse and violent diatribes of Clemens Alexandrinus against the vigils of the deified *exoletus*. But they cannot be answered, for antiquity is altogether silent about him; only here and there, in the indignant utterance of a Christian father, stung to the quick by pagan parallels between Antinous and Christ, do we catch a perverted echo of the popular emotion upon which his cult reposed, which recognized his godhood or his vicarious self-sacrifice, and which paid enduring tribute to the sublimity of his young life untimely quenched.

The *senatus consultum* required for the apotheosis of an emperor was not, so far as we know, obtained in the case of Antinous. Hadrian's determination to exalt his favorite sufficed; and this is perhaps one of the earliest instances of those informal deifications which became common in the later Roman period. Antinous was canonized according to Greek ritual and by Greek priests: *Græci quidam volente Hadriano eum consecraverunt*. How this was accomplished we know not; but forms of canonization must have been in common usage, seeing that emperors and members of the

imperial family received the honor in due course. The star which was supposed to have appeared soon after his death, and which represented his soul admitted to Olympus, was somewhere near the constellation Aquila, according to Ptolemy, but not part of it. I believe the letters η , θ , ι , κ , λ of Aquila now bear the name of Antinous; but this appropriation dates only from the time of Tycho Brahe. It was also asserted that as a new star had appeared in the skies, so a new flower had blossomed on the earth, at the moment of his death. This was the lotos, of a peculiar red color, which the people of Lower Egypt used to wear in wreaths upon his festival. It received the name Antinoeian; and the Alexandrian sophist, Pancrates, seeking to pay a double compliment to Hadrian and his favorite, wrote a poem in which he pretended that this lily was stained with the blood of a Libyan lion slain by the emperor. As Arrian compared his master to Achilles, so Pancrates flattered him with allusions to Herakles. The lotos, it is well known, was a sacred flower in Egypt. Both as a symbol of the all-nourishing moisture of the earth and of the mystic marriage of Isis and Osiris, and also as an emblem of immortality, it appeared on all the sacred places of the Egyptians, especially on tombs and funeral utensils. To dignify Antinous with the lotos emblem was to consecrate him; to find a new species of the revered blossom and to wear it in his honor, calling it by his name, was to exalt him to the company of gods. Nothing, as it seems, had been omitted that could secure for him the patent of divinity.

He met his death near the city Besa, an ancient Egyptian town upon the eastern bank of the Nile, almost opposite to Hermopolis. Besa was the name of a local god, who gave oracles and predicted future events. But of this Besa we know next to nothing. Hadrian determined to rebuild the city, change its name, and let his favorite take the place of the old deity. Accordingly, he raised a splendid new town in the Greek style; furnished it

with temples, agora, hippodrome, gymnasium, and baths; filled it with Greek citizens; gave it a Greek constitution, and named it Antinoë. This new town, whether called Antinoë, Antinoopolis, Antinous, Antinoëia, or even Besantinous (for its titles varied), continued long to flourish, and was mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus, together with Copton and Hermopolis, as one of the three most distinguished cities of the Thebaïd. In the age of Julian these three cities were perhaps the only still thriving towns of Upper Egypt. It has even been maintained on Ptolemy's authority that Antinoë was the metropolis of a nome, called Antinoëitis; but this is doubtful, since inscriptions discovered among the ruins of the town record no name of nomarch or strategus, while they prove the government to have consisted of a Boulè and a Prytaneus, who was also the eponymous magistrate. Strabo reckons it, together with Ptolemais and Alexandria, as governed after the Greek municipal system.

In this city Antinous was worshipped as a god. Though a Greek god, and the eponym of a Greek city, he inherited the place and functions of an Egyptian deity, and was here represented in the hieratic style of Ptolemaic sculpture. A fine specimen of this statuary is preserved in the Vatican, showing how the Neo-Hellenic sculptors had succeeded in maintaining the likeness of Antinous without sacrificing the traditional manner of Egyptian piety. The sacred emblems of Egyptian deities were added: we read, for instance, in one passage, that his shrine contained a boat. This boat, like the mystic egg of Eros or the cista of Dionysus, symbolized the embryo of cosmic life. It was specially appropriated to Osiris, and suggested collateral allusions doubtless to immortality and the soul's journey in another world. Antinous had a college of priests appointed to his service; and oracles were delivered from the cenotaph inside his temple. The people believed him to be a genius of warning, gracious to his

suppliants, but terrible to evil-doers, combining the qualities of the avenging and protective deities. Annual games were celebrated in Antinoë on his festival, with chariot races and gymnastic contests; and the fashion of keeping his day seems, from Athenæus's testimony, to have spread through Egypt. An inscription in Greek characters discovered at Rome upon the Campus Martius entitles Antinous a colleague of the gods in Egypt:

ANTINOΩΙ ΣΥΝΘΡΟΝΩΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΑΙΓΥΠΤΩΙ ΘΕΩΝ.

The worship of Antinous spread rapidly through the Greek and Asian provinces, especially among the cities which owed debts of gratitude to Hadrian or expected from him future favors. At Athens, for example, the emperor, attended, perhaps, by Antinous, had presided as Archon during his last royal progress, had built a suburb called after his name, and raised a splendid temple to Olympian Jove. The Athenians, therefore, founded games and a priesthood in honor of the new divinity. Even now in the Dionysiac theatre among the chairs above the orchestra assigned to priests of elder deities and more august tradition may be found one bearing the name of Antinous—ΙΕΡΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΝΟΟΥ. A marble tablet has also been discovered inscribed with the names of *agonothetai* for the games celebrated in honor of Antinous; and a stele exists engraved with the crown of these contests, together with the crowns of Severus, Commodus, and Antoninus. It appears that the games in honor of Antinous took place both at Eleusis and at Athens, and that the *agonothetai*, as also the priest of the new god, were chosen from the Ephebi. The Corinthians, the Argives, the Achæians, and the Epirots, as we know from coins issued by the priests of Antinous, adopted his cult;*

* For example:

ΟΣΤΙΑΙΟΣ ΜΑΡΚΕΛΛΟΣ Ο ΙΕΡΕΥΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΝΟΟΥ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΧΑΙΟΙΣ,
and a similar inscription for Corinth.

but the region of Greece proper where it flourished most was Arcadia, the mother state of his Bithynian birthplace. Pausanias, who lived contemporaneously with Antinous, and might have seen him—though he tells us that he had not chanced to meet the youth alive—mentions the temple of Antinous at Mantinea as the newest in that city. “The Mantineans,” he says, “reckon Antinous among their gods.” He then describes the yearly festival and mysteries connected with his cult, the quinquennial games established in his honor, and his statues. The gymnasium had a cell dedicated to Antinous, adorned with pictures and fair stone-work. The new god was in the habit of Dionysus.

As was natural, his birthplace paid him special observance. Coins dedicated by the province of Bithynia, as well as by the town Bithynium, are common, with the epigraphs ANTINOY H ΠΑΤΡΙΣ and ANTINOON ΘΕΟΝ H ΠΑΤΡΙΣ. Among the cities of Asia Minor and the vicinity the new cult seems to have been widely spread. Adramyttene in Mysia, Alabanda, Ancyra in Galatia, Chalcedon, Cuma in Æolis, Cyzicum in Mysia, the Ciani, the Hadrianotheritæ of Bithynia, Hierapolis in Phrygia, Nicomedia, Philadelphia, Sardis, Smyrna, Tarsus, the Tianians of Paphlagonia, and a town Rhesæna in Mesopotamia, all furnish their quota of medals. On the majority of these medals he is entitled Heros, but on others he has the higher title of god; and he seems to have been associated in each place with some deity of local fame.

Being essentially a Greek hero, or divinized man received into the company of immortals and worshipped with the attributes of god, his cult took firmer root among the Neo-Hellenic provinces of the empire than in Italy. Yet there are signs that even in Italy he found his votaries. Among these may first be mentioned the comparative frequency of his name in Roman inscriptions which

have no immediate reference to him, but prove that parents gave it to their children. The discovery of his statues in various cities of the Roman Campagna shows that his cult was not confined to one or two localities. Naples, in particular, which remained in all essential points a Greek city, seems to have received him with acclamation. A quarter of the town was called after his name, and a *phratría* of priests was founded in connection with his worship. The Neapolitans owed much to the patronage of Hadrian, and they repaid him after this fashion. At the beginning of the last century Raffaello Fabretti discovered an inscription near the Porta S. Sebastiano at Rome, which throws some light on the matter. It records the name of a Roman knight—Sufenas—who had held the office of Lupercus and had been a fellow of the Neapolitan phratría of Antinous—*fretriaco Neapoli Antinoiton et Eunostidon*. Eunostos was a hero worshipped at Tanagra in Bœotia, where he had a sacred grove no female foot might enter; and the wording of the inscription leaves it doubtful whether the Eunostidæ and Antinoitæ of Naples were two separate colleges, or whether the heroes were associated as the common patrons of one brotherhood.

A valuable inscription discovered in 1816 near the Baths at Lanuvium, or Lavigna, shows that Antinous was here associated with Diana as the saint of a benefit club. The rules of the confraternity prescribe the payments and other contributions of its members, provide for their assembling on the feast days of their patrons, fix certain fines, and regulate the ceremonies and expenses of their funerals. This club seems to have resembled modern burial societies as known to us in England, or still more closely to have been formed upon the same model as Italian *confraternità* of the Middle Ages. The Lex, or table of regulations, was drawn up in the year 133 A.D. It fixes the birthday of Antinous as V. Kal. Decemb., and alludes to the temple of Antin-

ous—*Tetrastylo Antinoi*. Probably we cannot build much on the birthday as a genuine date, for the same table gives the birthday of Diana; and what was wanted was not accuracy in such matters, but a settled anniversary for banquets and pious celebrations. When we come to consider the divinity of Antinous, it will be of service to remember that at Lanuvium, together with Diana of the nether world, he was reckoned among the saints of sepulture. Could this thought have penetrated the imagination of his worshippers: that since Antinous had given his life for his friend, since he had faced death and triumphed over it, winning immortality and godhood for himself by sacrifice, the souls of his votaries might be committed to his charge and guidance on their journey through the darkness of the tomb? Could we venture to infer thus much from his selection by a confraternity existing for the purpose of securing decent burial or pious funeral rites, the date of its formation, so soon after his death, would confirm the hypothesis that he was known to have devoted his life for Hadrian.

While speaking of Antinous as a divinized man, adscript to the gods of Egypt, accepted as hero and as god in Hellas, Italy, and Asia Minor, we have not yet considered the nature of his deity. The question is not so simple as it seems at first sight; and the next step to take, with a view to its solution, is to consider the various forms under which he was adored—the phases of his divinity. The coins already mentioned, and the numerous works of glyptic art surviving in the galleries of Europe, will help us to place ourselves at the same point of view as the least enlightened of his antique votaries. Reasoning upon these data by the light of classic texts may afterwards enable us to assign him his true place in the pantheon of decadent and uninventive paganism.

In Egypt, as we have already seen, Antinous was worshipped

by the Neo-Hellenes of Antinoöpolis as their eponymous hero; but he took the place of an elder native god, and was represented in art according to the traditions of Egyptian sculpture. The marble statue of the Vatican is devoid of hieratic emblems. Antinous is attired with the Egyptian head-dress and waistband; he holds a short truncheon firmly clasped in each hand; and by his side is a palm-stump, such as one often finds in statues of the Greek Hermes. Two colossal statues of red granite discovered in the ruins of Hadrian's villa at Tivoli represent him in like manner with the usual Egyptian head-dress. They seem to have been designed for pillars supporting the architrave of some huge portal; and the wands grasped firmly in both hands are supposed to be symbolical of the genii called *Dii Averrunci*. Von Levezow, in his monograph upon Antinous in art, catalogues five statues of a similar description to the three already mentioned. From the indistinct character of all of them it would appear that Antinous was nowhere identified with any one of the great Egyptian deities, but was treated as a *dæmon* powerful to punish and protect. This designation corresponds to the contemptuous rebuke addressed by Origen to Celsus, where he argues that the new saint was only a malignant and vengeful spirit. His Egyptian medals are few and of questionable genuineness; the majority of them seem to be purely Hellenic; but on one he bears a crown like that of Isis, and on another a lotos-wreath. The dim records of his cult in Egypt and the remnants of Græco-Egyptian art thus mark him out as one of the *Averruncan* deities, associated, perhaps, with *Kneph* or the *Agathodæmon* of Hellenic mythology, or approximated to *Anubis*, the Egyptian *Hermes*. Neither statues nor coins throw much light upon his precise place among those gods of Nile whose throne he is said to have ascended. Egyptian piety may not have been so accommodating as that of Hellas.

With the Græco-Roman world the case is different. We obtain a clearer conception of the Antinous divinity, and recognize him always under the mask of youthful gods already honored with fixed ritual. To worship even living men under the names and attributes of well-known deities was no new thing in Hellas. We may remember the ithyphallic hymn with which the Athenians welcomed Demetrius Poliorketes, the marriage of Antony as Dionysus to Athene, and the deification of Mithridates as Bacchus. The Roman emperors had already been represented in art with the characteristics of gods—Nero, for example, as Phæbus, and Hadrian as Mars. Such compliments were freely paid to Antinous. On the Achaian coins we find his portrait on the obverse, with different types of Hermes on the reverse, varied in one case by the figure of a ram, in another by the representation of a temple, in a third by a nude hero grasping a spear. One Mysian medal, bearing the epigraph “Antinous Iacchus,” represents him crowned with ivy, and exhibits Demeter on the reverse. A single specimen from Ancyra, with the legend “Antinous Heros,” depicts the god Lunus carrying a crescent moon upon his shoulder. The Bithynian coins generally give youthful portraits of Antinous upon the obverse, with the title of “Heros” or “Theos;” while the reverse is stamped with a pastoral figure, sometimes bearing the talaria, sometimes accompanied by a feeding ox or a boar or a star. This youth is supposed to be Philsius, the son of Hermes. In one specimen of the Bithynian series the reverse yields a head of Proserpine crowned with thorns. A coin of Chalcedon ornaments the reverse with a griffin seated near a naked figure. Another, from Corinth, bears the sun-god in a chariot; another, from Cuma, presents an armed Pallas. Bulls, with the crescent moon, occur in the Hadrianotheritan medals; a crescent moon in that of Hierapolis; a ram and star, a female head crowned with towers, a standing bull, and Harpocrates plac-

ing one finger on his lips, in those of Nicomedia; a horned moon and star in that of Epirot Nicopolis. One Philadelphian coin is distinguished by Antinous in a temple with four columns; another by an Aphrodite in her cella. The Sardian coins give Zeus with the thunderbolt, or Phœbus with the lyre; those of Smyrna are stamped with a standing ox, a ram, and the caduceus, a female panther and the thyrsus, or a hero reclining beneath a plane-tree; those of Tarsus with the Dionysian cista, the Phœbean tripod, the river Cydnus, and the epigraphs "Neos Puthios," "Neos Iacchos;" those of the Tiansians with Antinous as Bacchus on a panther, or, in one case, as Poseidon.

It would be unsafe to suppose that the emblems of the reverse in each case had a necessary relation to Antinous, whose portrait is almost invariably represented on the obverse. They may refer, as in the case of the Tarsian river-god, to the locality in which the medal was struck. Yet the frequent occurrence of the well-known type with the attributes and sacred animals of various deities, and the epigraphs "Neos Puthios" or "Neos Iacchos," justify us in assuming that he was associated with divinities in vogue among the people who accepted his cult—especially Apollo, Dionysus, and Hermes. On more than one coin he is described as Antinous-Pan, showing that his Arcadian compatriots of Peloponnese and Bithynia paid him the compliment of placing him beside their great local deity. In a Latin inscription discovered at Tibur he is connected with the sun-god of Noricia, Pannonia, and Illyria, who was worshipped under the title of Belenus:

Antinoo et Beleno par ætas famaue par est;
Cur non Antinous sit quoque qui Belenus?

This couplet sufficiently explains the ground of his adscription to the society of gods distinguished for their beauty. Both Belenus and Antinous are young and beautiful; why, therefore, should not

Antinous be honored equally with Belenus? The same reasoning would apply to all his impersonations. The pious imagination or the æsthetic taste tricked out this favorite of fortune in masquerade costumes, just as a wealthy lover may amuse himself by dressing his mistress after the similitude of famous beauties. The analogy of statues confirms this assumption. A considerable majority represent him as Dionysus Kisseus; in some of the best he is conceived as Hermes of the Palæstra or a simple hero; in one he is probably Dionysus Antheus; in another, Vertumnus or Aristæus; yet, again, he is the Agathos Daimon; while a fine specimen preserved in England shows him as Ganymede raising a goblet of wine; a little statue in the Louvre gives him the attributes of youthful Herakles; a bass-relief of somewhat doubtful genuineness in the Villa Albani exhibits him with Romanized features in the character, perhaps, of Castor. Again, I am not sure whether the Endymion in the celebrated bass-relief of the Capitol does not yield a portrait of Antinous.

This rapid enumeration will suffice to show that Antinous was universally conceived as a young deity in bloom, and that preference was given to Phœbus and Iacchus, the gods of divination and enthusiasm, for his associates. In some cases he appears to have been represented as a simple hero without the attributes of any deity. Many of his busts and the fine nude statues of the Capitol and the Neapolitan Museum belong to this class, unless we recognize the two last as Antinous under the form of a young Hercules or of the gymnastic Hermes. But when he comes before us with the title of Puthios, or with the attributes of Dionysus, distinct reference is probably intended in the one case to his oracular quality, in the other to the enthusiasm which led to his death. Allusions to Harpocrates, Lunus, Aristæus, Philesius, Vertumnus, Castor, Herakles, Ganymedes, show how the divinizing fancy played around the beauty of his youth and sought to con-

nect him with myths already honored in the pious conscience. Lastly, though it would be hazardous to strain this point, we find in his chief impersonations a Chthonian character, a touch of the mystery that is shrouded in the world beyond the grave. The double nature of his Athenian cult may, perhaps, confirm this view. But, over and above all these symbolic illustrations, one artistic motive of immortal loveliness pervades and animates the series.

It becomes at this point of some moment to determine what was the relation of Antinous to the gods with whom he blended and whose attributes he shared. It seems tolerably certain that he had no special legend which could be idealized in art. The mythopœic fancy invented no fable for him. His cult was parasitic upon elder cults. He was the colleague of greater well-established deities, from whom he borrowed a pale and evanescent lustre. Speaking accurately, he was a hero or divinized mortal, on the same grade as Helen immortalized for her beauty, as Achilles for his prowess, or as Herakles for his great deeds. But, having no poet like Homer to sing his achievements, no myth fertile in emblems, he dwelt beneath the shadow of superior powers, and crept into a place with them. What was this place worth? What was the meaning attached by his votaries to the title *σύνθερος* or *πάρεδρος θεός*? According to the simple meaning of both epithets, he occupied a seat together with or by the side of the genuine Olympians. In this sense Pindar called Dionysus the *πάρεδρος* of Demeter, because the younger god had been admitted to her worship on equal terms at Eleusis. In this sense Sophocles spoke of Himeros as *πάρεδρος* of the eternal laws, and of Justice as *σύνουκος* with the Chthonian deities. In this sense Euripides makes Helen *ξύνθακος* with her brethren, the Dioscuri. In this sense the three chief Archons at Athens were said to have two *πάρεδροι* apiece. In this sense, again, Hephæstion was named

a θεός πάρεδρος, and Alexander in his lifetime was voted a thirteenth in the company of the twelve Olympians. The divinized emperors were πάρεδροι or σύνθρονοι; nor did Virgil hesitate to flatter Augustus by questioning into which college of the immortals he would be adscript after death:

Tuque adeo, quem mox quæ sint habitura deorum
Concilia, incertum est.

Conscript deities of this heroic order were supposed to avert evils from their votaries, to pursue offenders with calamity, to inspire prophetic dreams, and to appear, as the phantom of Achilles appeared to Apollonius of Tyana, and answer questions put to them. They corresponded very closely and exactly to the saints of mediævalism, acting as patrons of cities, confraternities, and persons, and interposing between the supreme powers of heaven and their especial devotees. As a πάρεδρος of this exalted quality, Antinous was the associate of Phæbus, Bacchus, and Hermes among the Olympians, and a colleague with the gods of Nile. The principal difficulty of grasping his true rank consists in the variety of his emblems and divine disguises.

It must here be mentioned that the epithet πάρεδρος had a secondary and inferior signification. It was applied by later authors to the dæmons or familiar spirits who attended upon enchanter like Simon Magus or Apollonius; and such satellites were believed to be supplied by the souls of innocent young persons violently slain. Whether this secondary meaning of the title indicates a degeneration of the other, and forms the first step of the process whereby classic heroes were degraded into the foul fiends of mediæval fancy, or whether we find in it a wholly new application of the word, is questionable. I am inclined to believe that, while πάρεδρος θεός in the one case means an associate of the Olympian gods, πάρεδρος δαίμων in the other means a fellow-agent

and assessor of the wizard. In other words, however they may afterwards have been confounded, the two uses of the same epithet were originally distinct; so that not every *πάρεδρος θεός*, Achilles, or Hephæstion, or Antinous was supposed to haunt and serve a sorcerer, but only some inferior spirit over whom his black art gave him authority. The *πάρεδρος θεός* was so called because he sat with the great gods. The *πάρεδρος δαίμων* was so called because he sat beside the magician. At the same time there seems sufficient evidence that the two meanings came to be confounded; and as the divinities of Hellas, with all their lustrous train, paled before the growing splendor of Christ, they gradually fell beneath the necromantic ferule of the witch.

Returning from this excursion, and determining that Antinous was a hero or divinized mortal, adscript to the college of the greater gods, and invested with many of their attributes, we may next ask the question why this artificial cult, due in the first place to imperial passion and caprice, and nourished by the adulation of fawning provinces, was preserved from the rapid dissolution to which the flimsy products of court-flattery are subject. The mythopoetic faculty was extinct, or in its last phase of decadent vitality. There was nothing in the life of Antinous to create a legend or to stimulate the sense of awe; and yet this worship persisted long after the fear of Hadrian had passed away, long after the benefits to be derived by humoring a royal fancy had been exhausted, long after anything could be gained by playing out the farce. It is clear, from a passage in Clemens Alexandrinus, that the sacred nights of Antinous were observed, at least a century after the date of his deification, with an enthusiasm that roused the anger of the Christian father. Again, it is worthy of notice that, while many of the noblest works of antiquity have perished, the statues of Antinous have descended to us in fair preservation and in very large numbers. From the contemptuous

destruction which erased the monuments of base men in the Roman Empire they were safe, and the state in which we have them shows how little they had suffered from neglect. The most rational conclusion seems to be that Antinous became in truth a popular saint, and satisfied some new need in paganism for which none of the elder and more respectable deities sufficed. The novelty of his cult had, no doubt, something to do with the fascination it exercised; and something may be attributed to the impulse art received from the introduction of so rare and original a type of beauty into the exhausted cycle of mythical subjects. The blending of Greek and Egyptian elements was also attractive to an age remarkable for its eclecticism. But, after allowing for the many adventitious circumstances which concurred to make Antinous the fashion, it is hardly unreasonable to assume that the spirit of poetry in the youth's story, the rumor of his self-devoted death, kept him alive in the memory of the people. It is just that element of romance in the tale of his last hours, that preservative association with the pathos of self-sacrifice, which forms the interest we still feel for him.

The deified Antinous was therefore for the Roman world a charming but dimly felt and undeveloped personality, made perfect by withdrawal into an unseen world of mystery. The belief in the value of vicarious suffering attached itself to his beautiful and melancholy form. His sorrow borrowed something of the universal world-pain, more pathetic than the hero-pangs of Herakles, the anguish of Prometheus, or the passion of Iacchus-Zagreus, because more personal and less suggestive of a cosmic mystery. The ancient cries of Ah Linus, Ah Adonis, found in him an echo. For votaries ready to accept a new god as simply as we accept a new poet, he was the final manifestation of an old-world mystery, the rejuvenescence of a well-known incarnation, the semi-Oriental realization of a recurring Avatar. And if we may

venture on so bold a surmise, this last flower of antique mythology had taken up into itself a portion of the blood outpoured on Calvary. Planted in the conservatory of semi-philosophical yearnings, faintly tintured with the colors of misapprehended Christianity, without inherent stamina, without the powerful nutrition which the earlier heroic fables had derived from the spiritual vigor of a truly mythopœic age, the cult of Antinous subsisted as an echo, a reflection, the last serious effort of deifying but no longer potent paganism, the last reverberation of its oracles, an æsthetic rather than a religious product, viewed even in its origin with sarcasm by the educated, and yet sufficiently attractive to enthrall the minds of simple votaries, and to survive the circumstances of its first creation. It may be remembered that the century which witnessed the canonization of Antinous produced the myth of Cupid and Psyche; or, if this be too sweeping an assertion, gave it final form, and handed it, in its suggestive beauty, to the modern world. Thus at one and the same moment the dying spirit of Hellas seized upon those doctrines of self-devotion and immortality which, through the triumph of Christian teaching, were gaining novel and incalculable value for the world. According to its own laws of inspiration, it stamped both legends of Love victorious over Death, with beautiful form in myth and poem and statuary.

That we are not altogether unjustified in drawing this conclusion may be gathered from the attitude assumed by the Christian apologists towards Antinous. There is more than the mere hatred of a pagan hero, more than the bare indignation at a public scandal, in their acrimony. Accepting the calumnious insinuations of Dion Cassius, these gladiators of the new faith found a terrible rhetorical weapon ready to their hands in the canonization of a court favorite. Prudentius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Eusebius, Justin Martyr, Athanasius, Tatian—all inveigh,

in nearly the same terms, against the emperor's Ganymede, exalted to the skies, and worshipped with base fear and adulation by abject slaves. But in Origen, arguing with Celsus, we find a somewhat different key-note struck. Celsus, it appears, had told the story of Antinous, and had compared his cult with that of Christ. Origen replies justly, that there was nothing in common between the lives of Antinous and of Christ, and that his supposed divinity is a fiction. We can discern in this response an echo of the faith which endeared Antinous to his pagan votaries. Antinous was hated by the Christians as a rival; insignificant, it is true, and unworthy, but still of sufficient force to be regarded and persecuted. If Antinous had been utterly contemptible, if he had not gained some firm hold upon the piety of Græco-Roman paganism, Celsus could hardly have ventured to rest an argument upon his worship, nor would Origen have chosen to traverse that argument with solid reasoning, instead of passing it by in rhetorical silence. Nothing is more difficult than to understand the conditions of that age or to sympathize with its dominant passions. Educated as we have been in the traditions of the finally triumphant Christian faith, warmed through and through as we are by its summer glow and autumn splendor, believing as we do in the adequacy of its spirit to satisfy the cravings of the human heart, how can we comprehend a moment in its growth when the divinized Antinous was not merely an object offensive to the moral sense, but also a parody dangerous to the pure form of Christ?

It remains to say somewhat of Antinous as he appears in art. His place in classic sculpture corresponds to his position in antique mythology. The Antinous statues and coins are reflections of earlier artistic masterpieces, executed with admirable skill, but lacking original faculty for idealization in the artists. Yet there is so much personal attraction in his type, his statues are so man-

ifently faithful portraits, and we find so great a charm of novelty in his delicately perfect individuality, that the life-romance which they reveal, as through a veil of mystery, has force enough to make them rank among the valuable heirlooms of antiquity. We could almost believe that, while so many gods and heroes of Greece have perished, Antinous has been preserved in all his forms and phases for his own most lovely sake; as though, according to Ghiberti's exquisite suggestion, gentle souls in the first centuries of Christianity had spared this blameless youth, and hidden him away with tender hands, in quiet places, from the fury of iconoclasts. Nor is it impossible that the great vogue of his worship was due among the pagan laity to this same fascination of pure beauty. Could a more graceful temple of the body have been fashioned, after the Platonic theory, for the habitation of a guileless, god-inspired, enthusiastic soul? The personality of Antinous, combined with the suggestion of his self-devoted death, made him triumphant in art as in the affections of the pious.

It would be an interesting task to compose a *catalogue raisonné* of Antinous statues and bass-reliefs, and to discuss the question of their mythological references. This is, however, not the place for such an inquiry. And yet I cannot quit Antinous without some retrospect upon the most important of his portraits. Among the simple busts, by far the finest, to my thinking, are the colossal head of the Louvre, and the ivy-crowned bronze at Naples. The latter is not only flawless in its execution, but is animated with a pensive beauty of expression. The former, though praised by Winckelmann, as among the two or three most precious masterpieces of antique art, must be criticised for a certain vacancy and lifelessness. Of the heroic statues, the two noblest are those of the Capitol and Naples. The identity of the Capitoline Antinous has only once, I think, been seriously questioned; and yet it may be reckoned more than doubtful.

The head is almost certainly not his. How it came to be placed upon a body presenting so much resemblance to the type of Antinous I do not know. Careful comparison of the torso and the arms with an indubitable portrait will even raise the question whether this fine statue is not a Hermes or a hero of an earlier age. Its attitude suggests Narcissus or Adonis; and under either of these forms Antinous may properly have been idealized. The Neapolitan marble, on the contrary, yields the actual Antinous in all the exuberant fulness of his beauty. Head, body, pose, alike bring him vividly before us, forming an undoubtedly authentic portrait. The same personality, idealized, it is true, but rather suffering than gaining by the process, is powerfully impressed upon the colossal Dionysus of the Vatican. What distinguishes this great work is the inbreathed spirit of divinity, more overpowering here than in any other of the extant ἀνδριάντες καὶ ἀγάλματα. The bass-relief of the Villa Albani, restored to suit the conception of a Vertumnus, has even more of florid beauty; but whether the restoration was wisely made, may be doubted. It is curious to compare this celebrated masterpiece of technical dexterity with another bass-relief in the Villa Albani, representing Antinous as Castor. He is standing, half clothed with the chlamys, by a horse. His hair is close-cropped, after the Roman fashion, cut straight above the forehead, but crowned with a fillet of lotos-buds. The whole face has a somewhat stern and frowning Roman look of resolution, contrasting with the mild benignity of the Bacchus statues, and the almost sulky voluptuousness of the busts. In the Lateran Museum Antinous appears as a god of flowers, holding in his lap a multitude of blossoms, and wearing on his head a wreath. The conception of this statue provokes comparison with the Flora of the Neapolitan Museum. I should like to recognize in it a Dionysus Antheus, rather than one of the more prosy Roman gods of horticulture. Not unworthy to rank

with these first-rate portraits of Antinous is a Ganymede, engraved by the Dilettante Society, which represents him standing alert, in one hand holding the wine-jug and in the other lifting a cup aloft. It will be seen from even this brief enumeration of a few among the statues of Antinous, how many and how various they are. One, however, remains still to be discussed, which, so far as concerns the story of Antinous, is by far the most interesting of all. As a work of art, to judge by photographs, it is inferior to others in execution and design. Yet could we but understand its meaning clearly, the mystery of Antinous would be solved. The key to the whole matter probably lies here; but, alas! we know not how to use it. I speak of the Ildefonso Group at Madrid.*

On one pedestal there are three figures in white marble. To the extreme right of the spectator stands a little female statue of a goddess, in archaistic style, crowned with the calathos, and holding a sphere, probably of pomegranate fruit, to her breast. To the left of this image are two young men, three times the height of the goddess, quite naked, standing one on each side of a low altar. Both are crowned with a wreath of leaves and berries—laurel or myrtle. The youth to the right, next the image, holds a torch in either hand: with the right he turns the flaming point downward, till it lies upon the altar; with the left he lifts the other torch aloft, and rests it on his shoulder. He has a beautiful Græco-Roman face, touched with sadness or ineffable reflection. The second youth leans against his comrade, resting his left arm across the other's back, and this hand is lightly placed upon the shoulder, close to the lifted torch. His right arm is bent, and so placed that the hand just cuts the line of the pelvis a little above the hip. The weight of his body is thrown principally upon the right leg; the left foot is drawn back, away from the altar. It is

* See Frontispiece.

the attitude of the Apollo Sauroctonos. His beautiful face, bent downward, is intently gazing with a calm, collected, serious, and yet sad cast of earnest meditation. His eyes seem fixed on something beyond him and beneath him—as it were on an inscrutable abyss; and in this direction also looks his companion. The face is unmistakably the face of Antinous; yet the figure, and especially the legs, are not characteristic. They seem modelled after the conventional type of the Greek Ephebus. Parts of the two torches and the lower half of the right arm of Antinous are restorations.

Such is the Ildefonso marble; and it may be said that its execution is hard and rough—the arms of both figures are carelessly designed; the hands and fingers are especially angular, elongated, and ill-formed. But there is a noble feeling in the whole group, notwithstanding. F. Tieck, the sculptor and brother of the poet, was the first to suggest that we have here Antinous, the Genius of Hadrian, and Persephone.* He also thought that the self-immolation of Antinous was indicated by the loving, leaning attitude of the younger man, and by his melancholy look of resolution. The same view, in all substantial points, is taken by Friedrichs, author of a work on Græco-Roman sculpture. But Friedrichs, while admitting the identity of the younger figure with Antinous, and recognizing Persephone in the archaic image, is not prepared to accept the elder as the Genius of Hadrian; and it must be confessed that this face does not bear any resemblance to the portraits of the emperor. According to his interpretation, the dæmon is kindling the fire upon the sacrificial altar with the depressed torch; and the second or lifted torch must be supposed to have been needed for the performance of some obscure rite of

* See the article on Antinous, by Victor Rydberg, in the *Svensk Tidskrift för Litteratur, Politik, och Ekonomi*. 1875. Stockholm. Also Karl Bötticher, *Königliches Museum, Erklärendes Verzeichniss*. Berlin, 1871.

immolation. What Friedrichs fails to elucidate is the trustful attitude of Antinous, who could scarcely have been conceived as thus affectionately reclining on the shoulder of a merely sacrificial dæmon; nor is there anything upon the altar to kindle. It must, however, be conceded that the imperfection of the marble at this point leaves the restoration of the altar and the torch upon it doubtful.

Charles Bötticher started a new solution of the principal problem. According to him, it was executed in the lifetime of Antinous; and it represents not a sacrifice of death, but a sacrifice of fidelity on the part of the two friends, Hadrian and Antinous, who have met together before Persephone to ratify a vow of love till death. He suggests that the wreaths are of stephanotis, that large-leaved myrtle which was sacred to the Chthonian goddesses after the liberation of Semele from Hades by her son Dionysus. With reference to such ceremonies between Greek comrades, Bötticher cites a vase upon which Theseus and Peirithous are sacrificing in the temple of Persephone; and he assumes that there may have existed Athenian groups in marble representing similar vows of friendship, from which Hadrian had this marble copied. He believes that the Genius of Hadrian is kindling one torch at the sacred fire, which he will reach to Antinous, while he holds the other in readiness to kindle for himself. This explanation is both ingenious and beautiful. It has also the great merit of explaining the action of the right arm of Antinous. Yet it is hardly satisfactory. It throws no light upon the melancholy and solemnity of both figures, which irresistibly suggest a funereal rather than a joyous rite. Antinous is not even looking at the altar, and the meditative curves of his beautiful reclining form indicate anything rather than the spirited alacrity with which a friend would respond to his comrade's call at such a moment. Besides, why should not the likeness of Hadrian have been pre-

served as well as that of Antinous, if the group commemorated an act of their joint will? On the other hand, we must admit that the altar itself is not dressed for a funeral sacrifice.

It has been pointed out that in the British Museum there exists a bass-relief of Homer's apotheosis where we notice a figure holding two torches. Is it, then, possible that the Ildefonso marble may express, not the sacrifice, but the apotheosis of Antinous, and that the Genius who holds the two torches is conferring on him immortality? The lifted torch would symbolize his new life, and the depressed torch would stand for the life he had devoted. According to this explanation, the sorrowful expression of Antinous must indicate the agony of death through which he passed into the company of the undying. Against this interpretation is the fact that we have no precise authority for the symbolism of the torches, except only the common inversion of the life-brand by the Genius of Death.

Yet another solution may be suggested. Assuming that we have before us a sacrificial ceremony, and that the group was executed after the self-devotion of Antinous had passed into the popular belief, we may regard the elder youth as either the Genius of the Emperor, separate in spirit from Hadrian himself and presiding over his destinies, who accepts the offer of Antinous with solemn calmness suited to so great a gift; or else as the Genius of the Roman people, witnessing the same act in the same majestic spirit. This view finds some support in the abstract ideality of the torch-bearer, who is clearly no historical personage, as Antinous himself is, but rather a power controlling his fate. The interpretation of the two torches remains very difficult. In the torch flung down upon the flameless and barren altar we might recognize a symbol of Hadrian's life upon the point of extinction, but not yet extinguished; and in the torch lifted aloft we might find a metaphor of life resuscitated and exalted. Nor is it per-

haps without significance that the arm of the self-immolating youth meets the upraised torch, as though to touch the life which he will purchase with his death. There is, however, the objection stated above to this bold use of symbolism.

In support of any explanation which ascribes this group to a period later than the canonization of Antinous, it may be repeated that the execution is inferior to that of almost all the other statues of the hero. Is it possible, then, that it belongs to a subsequent date, when art was further on the wane, but when the self-devotion of Antinous had become a dogma of his cult?

After all is said, the Ildefonso marble, like the legend of Antinous, remains a mystery. Only hypotheses, more or less ingenious, more or less suited to our sympathies, varying between Casaubon's coarse vilification and Rydberg's roseate vision, are left us.

As a last note on the subject of Antinous let me refer to Raphael's statue of Jonah in the Chigi Chapel of S. Maria del Popolo at Rome. Raphael, who handled the myth of Cupid and Psyche so magnificently in the Villa Farnesina of his patron Agostino Chigi, dedicated a statue of Antinous—the only statue he ever executed in marble—under the title of a Hebrew prophet in a Christian sanctuary. The fact is no less significant than strange. During the early centuries of Christianity, as is amply proved by the sarcophagi in the Lateran Museum, Jonah symbolized self-sacrifice and immortality. He was a type of Christ, an emblem of the Christian's hope beyond the grave. During those same centuries Antinous represented the same ideas, however inadequately, however dimly, for the unlettered laity of paganism. It could scarcely have been by accident, or by mere admiration for the features of Antinous, that Raphael, in his marble, blended the Christian and the pagan traditions. To unify and to transcend the double views of Christianity and paganism in a work

of pure art was Raphael's instinctive, if not his conscious, aim. Nor is there a more striking instance of this purpose than the youthful Jonah with the head of Hadrian's favorite. Lionardo's Dionysus-John-the-Baptist seems but a careless *jeu d'esprit* compared with this profound and studied symbol of nascent humanism. Thus to regard the Jonah-Antinous of the Cappella Chigi as a type of immortality and self-devotion, fusing Christian and Græco-Roman symbolism in one work of modern art, is the most natural interpretation; but it would not be impossible to trace in it a metaphor of the resurgent pagan spirit also—as though, leaving Jonah and his Biblical associations in the background, the artist had determined that from the mouth of the monstrous grave should issue not a bearded prophet, but the victorious youth who had captivated with his beauty and his heroism the sunset age of the classic world. At any rate, whatever may have been Raphael's intention, the legend of Antinous, that last creation of antique mythology, shines upon us in this marble, just as the tale of Hero and Leander, that last blossom of antique literature, flowers afresh in the verses of our Marlowe. It would appear as though the Renaissance poets, hastening to meet the classic world with arms of welcome, had embraced its latest saints, as nearest to them, in the rapture of their first enthusiasm.

Over all these questions, over all that concerns Antinous, there rests a cloud of darkness and impenetrable doubt. To pierce that cloud is now impossible. The utmost we can do is to indulge our fancy in dreams of greater or less probability, and to mark out clearly the limitations of the subject. It is indeed something to have shown that the stigma of slavery and disgrace attaching to his name has no solid historical justification, and something to have suggested plausible reasons for conjecturing that his worship had a genuine spiritual basis. Yet the sincere critic, at the end of the whole inquiry, will confess that he has only cast a

plummet into the unfathomable sea of ignorance. What remains, immortal, indestructible, victorious, is Antinous in art. Against the gloomy background of doubt, calumny, contention, terrible surmise, his statues are illuminated with the dying glory of the classic genius—even as the towers and domes of a marble city shine forth from the purple banks of a thunder-cloud in sunset light. Here and here only does reality emerge from the chaos of conflicting phantoms. Front to front with them, it is allowed us to forget all else but the beauty of one who died young because the gods loved him. But when we question those wonderful mute features and beg them for their secret, they return no answer. There is not even a smile upon the parted lips. So profound is the mystery, so insoluble the enigma, that from its most importunate interrogation we derive nothing but an attitude of deeper reverence. This in itself, however, is worth the pains of study.*

* I must here express my indebtedness to my friend H. F. Brown for a large portion of the materials used by me in this essay on Antinous, which I had no means at Davos Platz of accumulating for myself, and which he unearthed from the libraries of Florence in the course of his own work, and generously placed at my disposal.

LUCRETIVS.

IN seeking to distinguish the Roman from the Greek genius, we can find no surer guide than Virgil's famous lines in the Sixth *Æneid*. Virgil lived to combine the traditions of both races in a work of profoundly meditated art, and to their points of divergence he was sensitive as none but a poet bent upon resolving them could be. The real greatness of the Romans consisted in their capacity for government, law, practical administration. What they willed, they carried into effect with an iron indifference to everything but the object in view. What they acquired, they held with the firm grasp of force, and by the might of organized authority. Their architecture, in so far as it was original, subserved purposes of public utility. Philosophy with them ceased to be speculative, and applied itself to the ethics of conduct. Their religious conceptions—in so far as these were not adopted together with general culture from the Greeks, or together with sensual mysticism from the East—were practical abstractions. The Latin ideal was to give form to the State by legislation, and to mould the citizen by moral discipline. The Greek ideal was contained in the poetry of Homer, the sculpture of Pheidias, the heroism of Harmodius, the philosophy of Socrates. Hellas was held together by no system, but by the Delphic oracle and the Olympian games. The Greeks depended upon culture, as the Romans upon law. The national character determined by culture, and that determined by discipline, eventually broke down; but the ruin in either case was different. The Greek became servile, indolent, and slippery; the Roman became arrogant, bloodthirsty,

tyrannous, and brutal. The Greeks in their best days attained to *σωφροσύνη*, their regulative virtue, by a kind of instinct; and even in their worst debasement they never exhibited the extravagance of lust and cruelty and pompous prodigality displayed by Rome. The Romans, deficient in the æsthetic instinct, whether applied to morals or to art, were temperate upon compulsion; and when the strain of law relaxed, they gave themselves unchecked to profligacy. The bad taste of the Romans made them aspire to the huge and monstrous. Nero's whim to cut through the isthmus, Caligula's villa built upon the sea at Baia, the acres covered by imperial palaces in Rome, are as Latin as the small scale of the Parthenon is Greek. Athens annihilates our notions of mere magnitude by the predominance of harmony and beauty, to which size is irrelevant. Rome dilates them to the full; it is the colossal greatness, the mechanical pride, of her monuments that wins our admiration. By comparing the Dionysian theatre at Athens, during a representation of the *Antigone*, with the Flavian amphitheatre at Rome, while the gladiators sang their *Ave Cæsar!* we gain at once a measure for the differences between Greek and Latin taste. In spiritual matters, again, Rome, as distinguished from Hellas, was omnivorous. The cosmopolitan receptivity of Roman sympathies, absorbing Egypt and the Orient wholesale, is as characteristic as the exclusiveness of the Greeks, their sensitive anxiety about the *ἥθος*. We feel that it was in a Roman rather than a Greek atmosphere, where no middle term of art existed like a neutral ground between the moral law and sin, where no delicate intellectual sensibilities interfered with the assimilation of new creeds, that Christianity was destined to strike root and flourish.

These remarks, familiar to students, form a proper prelude to the criticism of Lucretius; for in Lucretius the Roman character found its most perfect literary incarnation. He is at all points a

true Roman, gifted with the strength, the conquering temper, the uncompromising haughtiness, and the large scale of his race. Holding, as it were, the thought of Greece in fee, he administers the Epicurean philosophy as though it were a province, marshalling his arguments like legionaries, and spanning the chasms of speculative insecurity with the masonry of hypotheses. As the arches of the Pont du Gard, suspended in their power amid that solitude, produce an overmastering feeling of awe, so the huge fabric of the Lucretian system, hung across the void of Nihilism, inspires a sense of terror, not so much on its own account as for the Roman sternness of the mind that made it. "*Le retentissement de mes pas dans ces immenses voûtes me faisait croire entendre la forte voix de ceux qui les avait bâties. Je me perdais comme un insecte dans cette immensité.*" This is what Rousseau wrote about the aqueduct of Nismes. This is what we feel in pacing the corridors of the Lucretian poem. Sometimes it seems like walking through resounding caves of night and death, where unseen cataracts keep plunging down uncertain depths, and winds "thwarted and forlorn" swell from an unknown distance, and rush by, and wail themselves to silence in the unexplored beyond. At another time the impression left upon the memory is different. We have been following a Roman road from the gate of the Eternal City, through field and vineyard, by lake and river-bed, across the broad intolerable plain and the barren tops of Alps, down into forests where wild beasts and barbarian tribes wander, along the marge of Rhine or Elbe, and over frozen fens, in one perpetual straight line, until the sea is reached and the road ends because it can go no further. All the while, the iron wheel-rims of our chariot have jarred upon imperishable paved work; there has been no stop nor stay; the visions of things beautiful and strange and tedious have flown past; at the climax we look forth across a waste of waves and tumbling wil-

derness of surf and foam, where the storm sweeps and hurrying mists drive eastward close above our heads. The want of any respite, breathing-space, or intermission in the poem helps to force this image of a Roman journey on our mind. From the first line to the last there is no turning-point, no pause of thought, scarcely a comma, and the whole breaks off—

rixantes potius quam corpora desererentur—

as though a scythe-sweep from the arm of Death had cut the thread of singing short.

Is, then, this poem truly song? Indeed it is. The brazen voice of Rome becomes tunable; a majestic rhythm sustains the progress of the singer, who, like Milton's Satan,

O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims or sinks or wades or creeps or flies.

It is only because, being so much a Roman, he insists on moving ever onward with unwavering march, that Lucretius is often wearisome and rough. He is too disdainful to care to mould the whole stuff of his poem to one quality. He is too truth-loving to condescend to rhetoric. The scoriæ, the grit, the dross, the quartz, the gold, the jewels of his thought, are hurried onward in one mighty lava-flood, that has the force to bear them all with equal ease—not altogether unlike that hurling torrent of the world painted by Tintoretto in his picture of the Last Day, which carries on its breast cities and forests and men with all their works, to plunge them in a bottomless abyss.

Poems of the perfect Hellenic type may be compared to bronze statues, in the material of which many divers metals have been fused. Silver and tin and copper and lead and gold are there; each substance adds a quality to the mass; yet the whole is bronze. The furnace of the poet's will has so melted and min-

gled all these ores that they have run together and filled the mould of his imagination. It is thus that Virgil chose to work. He made it his glory to realize artistic harmony, and to preserve a Greek balance in his style. Not so Lucretius. In him the Roman spirit, disdainful, uncompromising, and forceful, had full sway. We can fancy him accosting the Greek masters of the lyre upon Parnassus, deferring to none, conceding naught, and meeting their arguments with proud indifference :

tu regere imperio populos Romane memento.

The Roman poet, swaying the people of his thoughts, will stoop to no persuasion, adopt no middle course. It is not his business to please, but to command ; he will not wait upon the *καίρος*, or court opportunity ; Greeks may surprise the Muses in relenting moods, and seek out "*mollia tempora fandi*;" all times and seasons must serve him ; the terrible, the discordant, the sublime, and the magnificent shall drag his thundering car-wheels, as he lists, along the road of thought.

At the very outset of the poem we feel ourselves within the grasp of the Roman imagination. It is no Aphrodite, risen from the waves and white as the sea-foam, that he invokes :

*Æneadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas,
alma Venus.*

This Venus is the mother of the brood of Rome, and at the same time an abstraction as wide as the universe. See her in the arms of Mavors :

qui sæpe tuum se
reicit æterno devictus vulnere amoris,
atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice reposta
pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus,
eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
hunc tu, diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto

circumfusa super, suavis ex ore loquelas
funde petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem.

In the whole Lucretian treatment of love there is nothing really Greek. We do not hear of Eros, either as the mystic mania of Plato, or as the winged boy of Meleager. Love in Lucretius is something deeper, larger, and more elemental than the Greeks conceived; a fierce and overmastering force, a natural impulse which men share in common with the world of things.* Both the pleasures and the pains of love are conceived on a gigantic scale, and described with an irony that has the growl of a roused lion mingled with its laughter:

ulcus enim vivescit et inveterascit alendo
inque dies gliscit furor atque ærumna gravescit.

The acts of love and the insanities of passion are viewed from no standpoint of sentiment or soft emotion, but always in relation to philosophical ideas or as the manifestation of something terrible in human life. Yet they lose nothing thereby in the voluptuous impression left upon the fancy:

sic in amore Venus simulacris ludit amantis,
nec satiare queunt spectando corpore coram
nec manibus quicquam teneris abradere membris
possunt errantes incerti corpore toto.
denique cum membris conlatis flore fruuntur
ætatis, jam cum præsagit gaudia corpus
atque in eost Venus ut muliebria conserat arva,
adfigunt avide corpus junguntque salivas

* A fragment preserved from the *Danaïdes* of Æschylus has the thought of Aphrodite as the mistress of love in earth and sky and sea and cloud; and this idea finds a philosophical expression in Empedocles. But the tone of these Greek poets is as different from that of Lucretius as a Greek Hera is from a Roman Juno.

oris et inspirant pressantes dentibus ora,
nequiquam, quoniam nil inde abraderè possunt
nec penetrare et abire in corpus corpore toto.

The master-word in this passage is *nequiquam*. "To desire the impossible," says the Greek proverb, "is a disease of the soul." Lucretius, who treats of physical desire as a torment, asserts the impossibility of its perfect satisfaction. There is something almost tragic in these sighs and pantings and pleasure-throes, and incomplete fruitions of souls pent up within their frames of flesh. We seem to see a race of men and women such as have never lived, except perhaps in Rome or in the thought of Michael Angelo,* meeting in leonine embracements that yield pain, whereof the climax is, at best, relief from rage and respite for a moment from consuming fire. There is a life *daemonic* rather than human in those mighty limbs; and the passion that bends them on the marriage-bed has in it the stress of storms, the rampings and the roarings of leopards at play. Or, take again this single line:

et Venus in silvis jungebat corpora amantum.

What a picture of primeval breadth and vastness! The *vice égrillard* of Voltaire, the coarse animalism of Rabelais, even the large comic sexuality of Aristophanes, are in another region: for the forest is the world, and the bodies of the lovers are things natural and unashamed, and Venus is the tyrannous instinct that controls the blood in spring. Only a Roman poet could have conceived of passion so mightily and so impersonally, expanding its sensuality to suit the scale of Titanic existences, and purging from it both sentiment and spirituality as well as all that makes it mean.

* See, for instance, his meeting of Ixion with the phantom of Juno, or his design for Leda and the Swan.

In like manner, the Lucretian conception of *ennui* is wholly Roman :

Si possent homines, proinde ac sentire videntur
pondus inesse animo quod se gravitate fatiget,
e quibus id fiat causis quoque noscere et unde
tanta mali tamquam moles in pectore constet,
haut ita vitam agerent, ut nunc plerumque videmus
quid sibi quisque velit nescire et quærere semper
commutare locum quasi onus deponere possit.
exit sæpe foras magnis ex ædibus ille,
esse domi quem pertæsumst, subitoque revertit,
quippe foris nilo melius qui sentiat esse.
currit agens mannos ad villam præcipitanter,
auxilium tectis quasi ferre ardentibus instans ;
oscitat extemplo, tetigit cum limina villæ,
aut abit in somnum gravis atque obliviam quærit,
aut etiam properans urbem petit atque revisit.
hoc se quisque modo fugit (at quem scilicet, ut fit,
effugere haut potis est, ingratis hæret) et odit
propterea, morbi quia causam non tenet æger ;
quam bene si videat, jam rebus quisque relictis
naturam primum studeat cognoscere rerum,
temporis æterni quoniam, non unius horæ,
ambigitur status, in quo sit mortalibus omnis
ætas, post mortem quæ restat cumque manenda.

Virgil would not have written these lines. A Greek poet could not have conceived them : unless we imagine to ourselves what Æschylus or Pindar, oppressed by long illness, and forgetful of the gods, might possibly have felt. In its sense of spiritual vacancy, when the world and all its uses have become flat, stale, unprofitable, and the sentient soul oscillates like a pendulum between weariful extremes, seeking repose in restless movement, and hurling the ruins of a life into the gulf of its exhausted cravings, we perceive already the symptoms of that unnamed malady which was the plague of imperial Rome. The tyrants and the suicides

of the empire expand before our eyes a pageant of their lassitude, relieved in vain by festivals of blood and orgies of unutterable lust. It is not that *ennui* was a specially Roman disease. Under certain conditions it is sure to afflict all overtaxed civilization; and for the modern world no one has expressed its nature better than the slight and feminine De Musset.* Indeed, the Latin language has no one phrase denoting *ennui*—*livor* and *fastidium*, and even *tædium vitæ*, meaning something more specific and less all-pervasive as a moral agency. This in itself is significant, since it shows the unconsciousness of the race at large, and renders the intuition of Lucretius all the more remarkable. But in Rome there were the conditions favorable to its development—imperfect culture, vehement passions unabsorbed by commerce or by political life, the habituation to extravagant excitement in war and in the circus, and the fermentation of an age foredestined to give birth to new religious creeds. When the infinite but ill-assured power of the empire was conferred on semi-madmen, Ennui in Rome assumed colossal proportions. Its victims sought for palliatives in cruelty and crime elsewhere unknown, except perhaps in Oriental courts. Lucretius, in the last days of the republic, had discovered its deep significance for human nature. To all the pictures of Tacitus it forms a solemn tragic background, enhancing, as it were, by spiritual gloom the carnival of passions which gleam so brilliantly upon his canvas. In the person of Caligula, Ennui sat supreme upon the throne of the terraqueous globe. The insane desires and the fantastic deeds of the autocrat who wished one head for humanity that he might cut it off, sufficiently reveal the extent to which his spirit had been gangrened by this ulcer. There is a simple paragraph in Suetonius which lifts the veil from his imperial unrest more ruthlessly than any legend: "Incitabatur insomniis maxime; neque enim plus

* See the prelude to *Les Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle* and *Les Nuits*.

tribus horis nocturnis quiescebat, ac ne his quidem placida quiete, at pavida miris rerum imaginibus . . . ideoque magna parte noctis, vigiliæ cubandique tædio, nunc toro residens, nunc per longissimas porticus vagus, invocare identidem atque expectare lucem consueverat." This is the very picture of Ennui that has become mortal disease. Nor was Nero different. "Néron," says Victor Hugo, "cherche tout simplement une distraction. Poète, comédien, chanteur, cocher, épuisant la férocité pour trouver la volupté, essayant le changement de sexe, époux de l'eunuque Sporus et épouse de l'esclave Pythagore, et se promenant dans les rues de Rome entre sa femme et son mari; ayant deux plaisirs: voir le peuple se jeter sur les pièces d'or, les diamants et les perles, et voir les lions se jeter sur le peuple; incendiaire par curiosité et parricide par désœuvrement." Nor need we stop at Nero. Over Vitellius at his banquets, over Hadrian in his Tiburtine villa calling in vain on Death, over Commodus in the arena, and Helio-gabalus among the rose-leaves, the same livid shadow of imperial Ennui hangs. We can even see it looming behind the noble form of Marcus Aurelius, who, amid the ruins of empire and the revolutions of belief, penned in his tent among the Quadi those maxims of endurance which were powerless to regenerate the world.

Roman, again, in the true sense of the word, is the Lucretian philosophy of Conscience. Christianity has claimed the celebrated imprecation of Persius upon tyrants for her own, as though to her alone belonged the secret of the soul-tormenting sense of guilt. Yet it is certain that we owe to the Romans that conception of sin bearing its own fruit of torment which the Latin fathers—Augustine and Tertullian—imposed with such terrific force upon the mediæval consciousness. There is no need to conclude that Persius was a Christian because he wrote—

Magne pater divum, sævos punire tyrannos, etc.,

when we know that he had before his eyes that passage in the third book of the *De Rerum Natura* (978-1023) which reduces the myths of Tityos and Sisyphus and Cerberus and the Furies to facts of the human soul :

sed metus in vita pœnarum pro male factis
est insignibus insignis, scelerisque luella,
carcer et horribilis de saxo jactu' deorsum,
verbera carnifices robur pix lammina tædæ ;
quæ tamen etsi absunt, at mens sibi conscia facti
præmetuens adhibet stimulos terretque flagellis
nec videt interea qui terminus esse malorum
possit nec quæ sit pœnarum denique finis
atque eadem metuit magis hæc ne in morte gravescant.

The Greeks, by personifying those secret terrors, had removed them into a region of existences separate from man. They became dread goddesses, who might to some extent be propitiated by exorcisms or expiatory rites. This was in strict accordance with the mythopœic and artistic quality of the Greek intellect. The stern and somewhat prosaic rectitude of the Roman broke through such figments of the fancy, and exposed the sore places of the soul itself. The theory of the Conscience, moreover, is part of the Lucretian polemic against false notions of the gods and the pernicious belief in hell.

Positivism and Realism were qualities of Roman as distinguished from Greek culture. There was no self-delusion in Lucretius—no attempt, however unconscious, to compromise unpalatable truth, or to invest philosophy with the charm of myth. A hundred illustrations might be chosen to prove his method of setting forth thought with unadorned simplicity. These, however, are familiar to any one who has but opened the *De Rerum Natura*. It is more profitable to trace this Roman ruggedness in the poet's treatment of the subject which more than any other

seems to have preoccupied his intellect and fascinated his imagination—that is, Death. His poem has been called by a great critic the “poem of Death.” Shakespeare’s line—

And Death once dead, there’s no more dying then—

might be written as a motto on the title-page of the book which is full of passages like this :

seire licet nobis nil esse in morte timendum
nec miserum fieri qui non est posse neque hilum
differre anne ullo fuerit jam tempore natus,
mortalem vitam mors cum immortalis ademit.

His whole mind was steeped in the thought of death; and though he can hardly be said to have written “the words that shall make death exhilarating,” he devoted his genius, in all its energy, to removing from before men the terror of the doom that waits for all. Sometimes, in his attempt at consolation, he adduces images which, like the Delphian knife, are double-handed, and cut both ways :

hinc indignatur se mortalem esse creatum
nec videt in vera nullum fore morte alium se
qui possit vivus sibi se lugere peremptum
stansque jacentem se lacerari urive dolere.

This suggests, by way of contrast, Blake’s picture of the soul that has just left the body and laments her separation. As we read, we are inclined to lay the book down and wonder whether the argument is, after all, conclusive. May not the spirit, when she has quitted her old house, be forced to weep and wring her hands, and stretch vain shadowy arms to the limbs that were so dear? No one has felt more profoundly than Lucretius the pathos of the dead. The intensity with which he realized what we must lose in dying, and what we leave behind of grief to those who loved us, reaches a climax of restrained passion in this well-known paragraph :

"jam jam non domus accipiet te læta, neque uxor
optima nec dulces occurrent oscula nati
præripere et tacita pectus dulcedine tangent.
non poteris factis florentibus esse, tuisque
præsidium. misero misere" aiunt "omnia ademit
una dies infesta tibi tot præmia vitæ."
illud in his rebus non addunt "nec tibi earum
jam desiderium rerum super insidet una."
quod bene si videant animo dictisque sequantur,
dissoluant animi magno se angore metuque.
"tu quidem ut es leto sopitus, sic eris ævi
quod superest cunctis privatu' doloribus ægris.
at nos horrifico cinefactum te prope busto
insatiabiliter deflevimus, æternumque
nulla dies nobis mærorem e pectore demet."

Images, again, of almost mediæval grotesqueness, rise in his mind when he contemplates the universality of death. Simonides had dared to say: "One horrible Charybdis waits for all." That was as near a discord as a Greek could venture on. Lucretius describes the open gate and "huge wide-gaping maw" which must devour heaven, earth, and sea, and all that they contain:

haut igitur leti præclusa est janua cælo
nec soli terræque neque altis æquoris undis,
sed patet immani et vasto respectat hiatu.

The ever-during battle of life and death haunts his imagination. Sometimes he sets it forth in philosophical array of argument. Sometimes he touches on the theme with elegiac pity:

miscetur funere vagor
quem pueri tollunt visentis luminis oras;
nec nox ulla diem neque noctem aurora secutast
quæ non audierit mixtos vagitibus ægris
ploratus mortis comites et funeris atri.

Then again he returns, with obstinate persistence, to describe

how the dread of death, fortified by false religion, hangs like a pall over humanity, and how the whole world is a cemetery overshadowed by cypresses. The most sustained, perhaps, of these passages is at the beginning of the third book (lines 31 to 93). The most profoundly melancholy is the description of the new-born child (v. 221):

quare mors immatura vagatur?
tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis
navita nudus humi jacet, infans, indigus omni
vitali auxilio, cum primum in luminis oras
nixibus ex alvo matris natura profudit,
vagituque locum lugubri complet, ut æcumst
cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum.

Disease and old age, as akin to death, touch his imagination with the same force. He rarely alludes to either without some lines as terrible as these (iii. 472, 453):

nam dolor ac morbus leti fabricator uterquest.
claudicat ingenium, delirat lingua, labat mens.

Another kindred subject affects him with an equal pathos. He sees the rising and decay of nations, age following after age, like waves hurrying to dissolve upon a barren shore, and writes (ii. 75):

sic rerum summa novatur
semper, et inter se mortales mutua vivunt,
augescunt aliæ gentes, aliæ minuuntur,
inque brevi spatio mutantur sæcla animantum
et quasi cursores vitæ lampada tradunt.

Although the theme is really the procession of life through countless generations, it obtains a tone of sadness from the sense of intervenient decay and change. No Greek had the heart thus to dilate his imagination with the very element of death. What the Greeks commemorated when they spoke of Death was the loss of the lyre and the hymeneal chant, and the passage across

din waves to a sunless land. Nor indeed does Lucretius, like the modern poet of Democracy, ascend into the regions of ecstatic trance :

Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O Death.

He keeps his reason cool, and sternly contemplates the thought of the annihilation which awaits all perishable combinations of eternal things. Like Milton, Lucretius delights in giving the life of his imagination to abstractions. Time, with his retinue of ages, sweeps before his vision, and he broods in fancy over the illimitable ocean of the universe. The fascination of the infinite is the quality which, more than any other, separates Lucretius as a Roman poet from the Greeks.

Another distinctive feature of his poetry Lucretius inherited as part of his birthright. This is the sense of Roman greatness. It pervades the poem, and may be felt in every part; although to Athens, and the Greek sages, Democritus, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Heraclitus, and Epicurus, as the fountain-heads of soul-delivering culture, he reserves his most magnificent periods of panegyric. Yet when he would fain persuade his readers that the fear of death is nugatory, and that the future will be to them even as the past, it is the shock of Rome with Carthage that he dwells upon as the critical event of the world's history (iii. 830) :

Nil igitur mors est ad nos neque pertinet hilum,
quandoquidem natura animi mortalis habetur.
et velut anteacto nil tempore sensimus ægri,
ad configendum venientibus undique Pœnis,
omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu
horrida contremuere sub altis ætheris oris,
in dubioque fuere utrorum ad regna cadendum
omnibus humanis esset terraque marique,
sic:

The lines in italics could have been written by none but a Ro-

man conscious that the conflict with Carthage had decided the absolute empire of the habitable world. In like manner the description of a military review (ii. 323) is Roman; so, too, is that of the amphitheatre (iv. 75):

et volgo faciunt id lutea russaque vela
et ferrugina, cum magnis intenta theatris
per malos volgata trabesque tremantia flutant.
namque ibi consessum caveai suppet et omnem
scenai speciem, patrum cœtumque decorum
inficiunt coguntque suo fluitare colore.

The imagination of Lucretius, however, was habitually less affected by the particular than by the universal. He loved to dwell upon the large and general aspects of things—on the procession of the seasons, for example, rather than upon the landscape of the Campagna in spring or autumn. Therefore it is only occasionally and by accident that we find in his verse touches peculiarly characteristic of the manners of his country. Therefore, again, it has happened that modern critics have detected a lack of patriotic interest in this most Roman of all Latin poets. Also may it here be remembered that the single line which sums up all the history of Rome in one soul-shaking hexameter is not Lucretian but Virgilian:

Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.

The custode of the Baths of Titus, when he lifts his torch to explore those ruined arches, throws the wan light upon one place where a Roman hand has scratched that verse in gigantic letters on the cement. The colossal genius of Rome seems speaking to us, an oracle no lapse of time can render dumb.

But Lucretius is not only the poet *par excellence* of Rome. He will always rank also among the first philosophical poets of the world; and here we find a second standpoint for inquiry. The question how far it is practicable to express philosophy in verse,

and to combine the accuracy of scientific language with the charm of rhythm and the ornaments of the fancy, is one which belongs rather to modern than to ancient criticism. In the progress of culture there has been an ever-growing separation between the several spheres of intellectual activity. What Livy said about the Roman Empire is true now of knowledge: *magnitudine laborat sua*; so that the labor of specializing and distinguishing has for many centuries been all-important. Not only do we disbelieve in the desirability of smearing honey upon the lip of the medicine-glass through which the draught of erudition has to be administered, but we know for certain that it is only at the meeting-points between science and emotion that the philosophic poet finds a proper sphere. Whatever subject-matter can be permeated or penetrated with strong human feeling is fit for verse. Then the rhythms and the forms of poetry to which high passions naturally move become spontaneous. The emotion is paramount, and the knowledge conveyed is valuable as supplying fuel to the fire of feeling. There are, were, and always will be high imaginative points of vantage commanding the broad fields of knowledge, upon which the poet may take his station to survey the world and all that it contains. But it has long ceased to be his function to set forth, in any kind of metre, systems of speculative thought or purely scientific truths. This was not the case in the old world. There was a period in the development of the intellect when the abstractions of logic appeared like intuitions, and guesses about the structure of the universe still wore the garb of fancy. When physics and metaphysics were scarcely distinguished from mythology, it was natural to address the Muses at the outset of a treatise of ontology, and to cadence a theory of elemental substances in hexameter verse. Thus the philosophical poems of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles belonged essentially to a transitional stage of human culture.

There is a second species of poetry to which the name of philosophical may be given, though it better deserves that of mystical. Pantheism occupies a middle place between a scientific theory of the universe and a form of religious enthusiasm. It supplies an element in which the poetic faculty can move with freedom; for its conclusions, in so far as they pretend to philosophy, are large and general, and the emotions which it excites are coextensive with the world. Therefore, Pantheistic mysticism, from the Bhagavadgita of the far East, through the Persian Soofis, down to the poets of our own century, Goethe and Shelley and Wordsworth and Whitman, and many more whom it would be tedious to enumerate, has generated a whole tribe of philosophic singers.

Yet a third class may be mentioned. Here we have to deal with what are called didactic poems. These, like the metaphysical epic, began to flourish in early Greece at the moment when exact thought was dividing itself laboriously from myths and fancies. Hesiod with his poem on the life of man leads the way; and the writers of moral sentences in elegiac verse, among whom Solon and Theognis occupy the first place, follow. Latin literature contributes highly artificial specimens of this kind in the *Georgics* of Virgil, the stoical diatribes of Persius, and the *Ars Poetica* of Horace. Didactic verse had a special charm for the genius of the Latin race. The name of such poems in the Italian literature of the Renaissance is legion. The French delighted in the same style under the same influences; nor can we fail to attribute the *Essay on Man* and the *Essay on Criticism* of our own Pope to a similar revival in England of Latin forms of art. The taste for didactic verse has declined. Yet in its stead another sort of philosophical poetry has grown up in this century, which, for the want of a better term, may be called psychological. It deserves this title, inasmuch as the motive-interest of the art in question is less the passion or the action of humanity than the

analysis of the same. The *Faust* of Goethe, the *Prelude* and *Excursion* of Wordsworth, Browning's *Sordello*, and Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, together with the *Musings* of Coleridge and the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson, may be roughly reckoned in this class. It will be noticed that nothing has been said about professedly religious poetry, much of which attaches itself to mysticism, while some, like the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, is philosophic in the truest sense of the word.

Where, then, are we to place Lucretius? He was a Roman, imbued with the didactic predilections of the Latin race; and the didactic quality of the *De Rerum Natura* is unmistakable. Yet it would be uncritical to place this poem in the class which derives from Hesiod. It belongs really to the succession of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. As such it was an anachronism. The specific moment in the development of thought at which the Parmenidean Epic was natural has been already described. The Romans of the age of Lucretius had advanced far beyond it. The idealistic metaphysics of the Socratic school, the positive ethics of the Stoics, and the profound materialism of Epicurus, had accustomed the mind to habits of exact and subtle thinking, prolonged from generation to generation upon the same lines of speculative inquiry. Philosophy expressed in verse was out of date. Moreover, the very myths had been rationalized. Euhemerus had even been translated into Latin by Ennius, and his prosaic explanations of Greek legend had found acceptance with the essentially positive Roman intellect. Lucretius himself, it may be said in passing, thought it worth while to offer a philosophical explanation of the Greek mythology. The Cybele of the poets is shown in one of his sublimest passages (ii. 600-645) to be Earth. To call the sea Neptune, corn Ceres, and wine Bacchus, seems to him a simple folly (ii. 652-657). We have already seen how he reduces the fiends and spectres of the Greek

Hades to facts of moral subjectivity (iii. 978-1023). In another place he attacks the worship of Phœbus and the stars (v. 110); in yet another he upsets the belief in the Centaurs, Scylla, and Chimæra (v. 877-924) with a gravity which is almost comic. Such arguments formed a necessary element in his polemic against foul religion (*fœda religio—turpis religio*); to deliver men from which (i. 62-112), by establishing firmly in their minds the conviction that the gods exist far away from this world in unconcerned tranquillity (ii. 646), and by substituting the notion of Nature for that of deity (ii. 1090), was the object of his scientific demonstration.

Lucretius, therefore, had outgrown mythology, was hostile to religion, and burned with unsurpassable enthusiasm to indoctrinate his Roman readers with the weighty conclusions of systematized materialism. Yet he chose the vehicle of hexameter verse, and trammelled his genius with limitations which Empedocles, four hundred years before, must have found almost intolerable. It needed the most ardent intellectual passion and the loftiest inspiration to sustain on his far flight a poet who had forged a hoplite's panoply for singing robes. Both passion and inspiration were granted to Lucretius in full measure. And just as there was something contradictory between the scientific subject-matter and the poetical form of his masterpiece, so the very sources of his poetic strength were such as are usually supposed to depress the soul. His passion was for death, annihilation, godlessness. It was not the eloquence, but the force of logic, in Epicurus that roused his enthusiasm:

ergo vivida vis animi pervicit et extra
processit longe flammantia moenia mundi.

No other poet who ever lived in any age, or on any shore, drew inspiration from founts more passionless and more impersonal.

The *De Rerum Natura* is, therefore, an attempt, unique in its kind, to combine philosophical exposition and poetry in an age when the requirements of the former had already outgrown the resources of the latter. Throughout the poem we trace a discord between the matter and the form. The frost of reason and the fire of fancy war in deadly conflict; for the Lucretian system destroyed nearly everything with which the classical imagination loved to play. It was only in some high ethereal region, before the majestic thought of death or the new myth of Nature, that the two faculties of the poet's genius met for mutual support. Only at rare intervals did he allow himself to make artistic use of mere mythology, as in the celebrated exordium of the first book, or the description of the Seasons in the fifth book (737-745). For the most part reason and fancy worked separately: after long passages of scientific explanation, Lucretius indulged his readers with those pictures of unparalleled sublimity and grace which are the charm of the whole poem; or dropping the phraseology of atoms, void, motion, chance, he spoke at times of Nature as endowed with reason and a will (v. 186, 811, 846).

It would be beyond the scope of this essay to discuss the particular form given by Lucretius to the Democritean philosophy. He believed the universe to be composed of atoms, infinite in number, and variable, to a finite extent, in form, which drift slantingly through an infinite void. Their combinations under the conditions of what we call space and time are transitory, while they remain themselves imperishable. Consequently, as the soul itself is corporeally constituted, and as thought and sensation depend on mere material *idola*, men may divest themselves of any fear of the hereafter. There is no such thing as providence, nor nor do the gods concern themselves with the kaleidoscopic medley of atoms in transient combination which we call our world. The latter were points of supreme interest to Lucretius. He

seems to have cared for the cosmology of Epicurus chiefly as it touched humanity through ethics and religion. To impartial observers, the identity or the divergence of the forms assumed by scientific hypothesis at different periods of the world's history is not a matter of much importance. Yet a peculiar interest has of late been given to the Lucretian materialism by the fact that physical speculation has returned to what is substantially the same ground. The most modern theories of evolution and of molecular structure may be stated in language which, allowing for the progress made by exact thought during the last twenty centuries, is singularly like that of Lucretius. The Roman poet knew fewer facts than are familiar to our men of science, and was far less able to analyze one puzzle into a whole group of unexplained phenomena. He had, besides, but a feeble grasp upon those discoveries which subserve the arts of life and practical utility. But as regards *absolute knowledge*—knowledge, that is to say, of what the universe really is, and of how it became what it seems to us to be—Lucretius stood at the same point of ignorance as we, after the labors of Darwin and of Spencer, of Helmholtz and of Huxley, still do. Ontological speculation is as barren now as then, and the problems of existence still remain insoluble. The chief difference, indeed, between him and modern investigators is that they have been lessened by the experience of the last two thousand years to know better the depths of human ignorance, and the directions in which it is possible to sound them.

It may not be uninteresting to collect a few passages in which the Roman poet has expressed in his hexameters the lines of thought adopted by our most advanced theorists. Here is the general conception of Nature, working by her own laws towards the achievement of that result which we apprehend through the medium of the senses (ii. 1090) :

Quæ bene cognita si teneas, natura videtur
libera continuo dominis privata superbis
ipsa sua per se sponte omnia dis agere experts.

Here, again, is a demonstration of the absurdity of supposing that the world was made for the use of men (v. 156):

dicere porro hominum causa voluisse parare
præclaram mundi naturam proptereaque
adlaudabile opus divom laudare decere
æternumque putare atque immortale futurum
nec fas esse, deum quod sit ratione vetusta
gentibus humanis fundatum perpetuo ævo,
sollicitare suis ulla vi ex sedibus umquam
nec verbis vexare et ab imo evertere summa,
cetera de genere hoc adfingere et addere, Memmi,
desiperest.

A like cogent rhetoric is directed against the arguments of teleology (iv. 823):

Illud in his rebus vitium vehementer avessis
effugere, errorem vitareque præmetuenter,
lumina ne facias oculorum clara creata,
prospicere ut possemus, et ut proferre queamus
proceros passus, ideo fastigia posse
surarum ac feminum pedibus fundata plicari,
bracchia tum porro validis ex apta lacertis
esse manusque datas utraque ex parte ministras,
ut facere ad vitam possemus quæ foret usus.
cetera de genere hoc inter quæcumque pretantur
omnia perversa præpostera sunt ratione,
nil ideo quoniam natumst in corpore ut uti
possemus, sed quod natumst id procreat usum.
nec fuit ante videre oculorum lumina nata
nec dictis orare prius quam lingua creatast,
sed potius longe linguae præcessit origo
sermonem multoque creatæ sunt prius aures

quam sonus est auditus, et omnia denique membra
ante fuere, ut opinor, eorum quam foret usus.
haud igitur potuere utendi crescere causa.

The ultimate dissolution and the gradual decay of the terrestrial globe is set forth in the following luminous passage (ii. 1148):

Sic igitur magni quoque circum mœnia mundi
expugnata dabunt labem putrisque ruinas.
jamque adeo fracta est ætas effetaque tellus
vix animalia parva creat quæ cuncta creavit
sæcla deditque ferarum ingentia corpora partu.*

The same mind which recognized these probabilities knew also that our globe is not single, but that it forms one among an infinity of sister orbs (ii. 1084):

quapropter cælum simili ratione fatendumst
terramque et solem lunam mare, cetera quæ sunt,
non esse unica, sed numero magis innumerali.†

When Lucretius takes upon himself to describe the process of becoming which made the world what it now is, he seems to incline to a theory not at all dissimilar to that of unassisted evolution (v. 419):

nam certe neque consilio primordia rerum
ordine se suo quæque sagaci mente locarunt
nec quos quæque darent motus pepigere profecto,
sed quia multa modis multis primordia rerum
ex infinito jam tempore percita plagis
ponderibusque suis consuerunt concita ferri

* Compare book v. 306-317 on the evidences of decay continually at work in the fabric of the world.

† The same truth is insisted on with even greater force of language in vi. 649-652.

omnimodisque coire atque omnia pertemptare,
quæcumque inter se possent congressa creare,
propterea fit uti magnum volgata per ævom
omne genus cætus et motus experiundo
tandem convenient ea quæ convecta repente
magnarum rerum fiunt exordia sæpe,
terrai maris et cæli generisque animantum.

Entering into the details of the process, he describes the many ill-formed, amorphous beginnings of organized life upon the globe which came to nothing, "since nature set a ban upon their increase" (v. 837-848); and then proceeds to explain how, in the struggle for existence, the stronger prevailed over the weaker (v. 855-863). What is really interesting in this exposition is that Lucretius ascribes to nature the volition ("convertibat ibi natura foramina terræ;" "quoniam natura absterruit auctum") which has recently been attributed by materialistic speculators to the same maternal power.

To press these points, and to neglect the gap which separates Lucretius from thinkers fortified by the discoveries of modern chemistry, astronomy, physiology, and so forth, would be childish. All we can do is to point to the fact that the circumambient atmosphere of human ignorance, with reference to the main matters of speculation, remains undissipated. The mass of experience acquired since the age of Lucretius is enormous, and is infinitely valuable; while our power of tabulating, methodizing, and extending the sphere of experimental knowledge seems to be unlimited. Only ontological deductions, whether negative or affirmative, remain pretty much where they were then.

The fame of Lucretius, however, rests not on this foundation of hypothesis. In his poetry lies the secret of a charm which he will continue to exercise as long as humanity chooses to read Latin verse. No poet has created a world of larger and nobler images

designed with the *sprezzatura* of indifference to mere gracefulness, but all the more fascinating because of the artist's negligence. There is something monumental in the effect produced by his large-sounding single epithets and simple names. We are at home with the dæmonic life of nature when he chooses to bring Pan and his following before our eyes (iv. 580). Or, again, the Seasons pass like figures on some frieze of Mantegna, to which, by divine accident, has been added the glow of Titian's coloring (v. 737):

it ver et Venus, et veris prænuntius ante
pennatus graditur zephyrus, vestigia propter
Flora quibus mater præspargens ante viai
cuncta coloribus egregiis et odoribus opplet.
inde loci sequitur calor aridus et comes una
pulverulenta Ceres et etesia flabra aquilonum.
inde autumnus adit, graditur simul Euhius Euan.
inde aliæ tempestates ventique secuntur,
altitonans Voltumnus et auster fulmine pollens.
tandem bruma nives adfert pigrumque rigorem,
prodit hiemps, sequitur crepitans hanc dentibus alior.*

With what a noble style, too, are the holidays of the primeval pastoral folk described (v. 1379-1404). It is no mere celebration of the *bell' età dell' oro*: but we see the woodland glades and hear the songs of shepherds and feel the hush of summer among rustling forest trees, while at the same time all is far away, in a better, simpler, larger age. The sympathy of Lucretius for every form of country life was very noticeable. It belonged to that which was most deeply and sincerely poetic in the Latin genius, whence Virgil drew his sweetest strain of melancholy, and

* The elaborate illustration of the first four lines of this passage, painted by Botticelli (in the Florence Academy of Fine Arts), proves Botticelli's incapacity or unwillingness to deal with the subject in the spirit of the original. It is graceful and "subtle" enough, but not Lucretian.

Horace his most unaffected pictures, and Catullus the tenderness of his best lines on Sirmio. No Roman surpassed the pathos with which Lucretius described the separation of a cow from her calf (ii. 352-365). The same note, indeed, was touched by Virgil in his lines upon the forlorn nightingale, and in the peroration to the third *Georgic*. But the style of Virgil is more studied, the feeling more artistically elaborated. It would be difficult to parallel such Lucretian passages in Greek poetry. The Greeks lacked an undefinable something of rusticity which dignified the Latin race. This quality was not altogether different from what we call homeliness. Looking at the busts of Romans, and noticing their resemblance to English country-gentlemen, I have sometimes wondered whether the Latin genius, just in those points where it differed from the Greek, was not approximated to the English.

All subjects needing a large style, brief and rapid, but at the same time luminous with imagination, were sure of the right treatment from Lucretius. This is shown by his enumeration of the celestial signs (v. 1188):

in cœloque deum sedes et templa locarunt,
per cælum volvi quia nox et luna videtur,
luna dies et nox et noctis signa severa
noctivagæque faces cæli flammæque volantes,
nubila sol imbres nix venti fulmina grando
et rapidi fremitus et murmura magna minarum.

Again, he never failed to rise to an occasion which required the display of fervid eloquence. The Roman eloquence, which in its energetic volubility was the chief force of Juvenal, added a tidal strength and stress of storm to the quick-gathering thoughts of the greater poet. The exordia to the first and second books, the analysis of love in the fourth, the praises of Epicurus in the third and fifth, the praises of Empedocles and Ennius in the first, the

elaborate passage on the progress of civilization in the fifth, and the description of the plague at Athens which closes the sixth, are noble instances of the sublimest poetry sustained and hurried onward by the volume of impassioned improvisation. It is difficult to imagine that Lucretius wrote slowly. The strange word *vociferari*, which he uses so often, and which the Romans of the Augustan age almost dropped from their poetic vocabulary, seems exactly made to suit his utterance. Yet at times he tempers the full torrent of resonant utterance with divine tranquillity, and leaves upon our mind that sense of powerful aloofness from his subject which only belongs to the mightiest poets in their most majestic moments. One instance of this rare felicity of style shall end the list of our quotations (v. 1194):

O genus infelix humanum, talia divis
cum tribuit facta atque iras adjunxit acerbas!
quantos tum gemitus ipsi sibi, quantaque nobis
vulnera, quas lacrimas peperere minoribu' nostris!
nec pietas ullast velatum sæpe videri
vertier ad lapidem atque omnis accedere ad aras
nec procumbere humi prostratum et pandere palmas
ante deum delubra nec aras sanguine multo
spargere quadrupedum nec votis nectere vota,
sed mage pacata posse omnia mente tueri.
nam cum suspicimus magni cælestia mundi
templa, super stellisque micantibus æthera fixum,
et venit in mentem solis lunæque viarum,
tunc aliis oppressa malis in pectora cura
illa quoque expergefactum caput erigere infit,
ne quæ forte deum nobis immensa potestas
sit, vario motu quæ candida sidera verset.
temptat enim dubiam mentem rationis egestas,
ecquænam fuerit mundi genitalis origo,
et simul ecquæ sit finis, quoad mœnia mundi
solliciti motus hunc possint ferre laborem,

an divinitus æterna donata salute
perpetuo possint ævi labentia tractu
inmensi validas ævi contemnere viris.

It would be impossible to adduce from any other poet a passage in which the deepest doubts and darkest terrors and most vexing questions that beset the soul are touched with an eloquence more stately and a pathos more sublime. Without losing the sense of humanity, we are carried off into the infinite. Such poetry is as imperishable as the subject of which it treats.

AMALFI, PÆSTUM, CAPRI.

THE road between Vietri and Amalfi is justly celebrated as one of the most lovely pieces of coast scenery in Italy. Its only rivals are the roads from Castellamare to Sorrento, from Genoa to Sestri, and from Nice to Mentone. Each of these has its own charm; and yet their similarity is sufficient to invite comparison: under the spell of each in turn we are inclined to say, This then, at all events, is the most beautiful. On first quitting Vietri, Salerno is left low down upon the sea-shore, nestling into a little corner of the bay which bears its name, and backed up by gigantic mountains. With each onward step these mountain-ranges expand in long aerial line, revealing reaches of fantastic peaks, that stretch away beyond the plain of Pæstum, till they end at last in mist and sunbeams shimmering on the sea. On the left hand hangs the cliff above the deep salt water, with here and there a fig-tree spreading fanlike leaves against the blue beneath. On the right rises the hill-side, clothed with myrtle, lentisk, cistus, and pale yellow coronilla—a tangle as sweet with scent as it is gay with blossom. Over the parapet that skirts the precipice lean heavy-foliaged locust-trees, and the terraces in sunny nooks are set with lemon-orchards. There are but few olives, and no pines. Meanwhile each turn in the road brings some change of scene: now a village with its little beach of gray sand, lapped by clearest sea-waves, where bare-legged fishermen mend their nets, and naked boys bask like lizards in the sun; now towering bastions of weird rock, broken into spires and pinnacles like those of Skye, and colored with bright hues of red and orange; then a

ravine, where the thin thread of a mountain streamlet seems to hang suspended upon ferny ledges in the limestone—or a precipice defined in profile against sea and sky, with a lad, half dressed in goat-skin, dangling his legs into vacuity and singing—or a tract of cultivation, where the orange, apricot, and lemon trees nestle together upon terraces with intermingled pergolas of vines.

Amalfi and Atrani lie close together in two of these ravines, the mountains almost arching over them, and the sea washing their very house-walls. Each has its crowning campanile; but that of Amalfi is the stranger of the two, like a Moorish tower at the top, and colored with green and yellow tiles that glitter in the sunlight. The houses are all dazzling white, plastered against the naked rock, rising on each other's shoulders to get a glimpse of earth and heaven, jutting out on coigns of vantage from the toppling cliff, and pierced with staircases as dark as night at noonday. Some frequented lanes lead through the basements of these houses; and as the donkeys pick their way from step to step in the twilight, bare-chested macaroni-makers crowd forth like ants to see us strangers pass. A myriad of swallows or a swarm of mason-bees might build a town like this.

It is not easy to imagine the time when Amalfi and Atrani were one town, with docks and arsenals and harborage for their associated fleets, and when these little communities were second in importance to no naval power of Christian Europe. The Byzantine Empire lost its hold on Italy during the eighth century; and after this time the history of Calabria is mainly concerned with the republics of Naples and Amalfi, their conflict with the Lombard dukes of Benevento, their opposition to the Saracens, and their final subjugation by the Norman conquerors of Sicily. Between the year 839 A.D., when Amalfi freed itself from the control of Naples and the yoke of Benevento, and the year 1131, when Roger of Hauteville incorporated the republic in his king-

dom of the Two Sicilies, this city was the foremost naval and commercial port of Italy. The burghers of Amalfi elected their own doge; founded the Hospital of Jerusalem, whence sprang the knightly order of St. John; gave their name to the richest quarter in Palermo; and owned trading establishments or factories in all the chief cities of the Levant. Their gold coinage of *tari* formed the standard of currency before the Florentines had stamped the lily and St. John upon the Tuscan florin. Their shipping regulations supplied Europe with a code of maritime laws. Their scholars, in the darkest depth of the dark ages, prized and conned a famous copy of the Pandects of Justinian; and their seamen deserved the fame of having first used, if they did not actually invent, the compass.

To modern visitors those glorious centuries of Amalfitan power and independence cannot but seem fabulous; so difficult is it for us to imagine the conditions of society in Europe when a tiny city, shut in between barren mountains and a tideless sea, without a circumjacent territory, and with no resources but piracy or trade, could develop maritime supremacy in the Levant and produce the first fine flowers of liberty and culture.

If the history of Amalfi's early splendor reads like a brilliant legend, the story of its premature extinction has the interest of a tragedy. The republic had grown and flourished on the decay of the Greek Empire. When the hard-handed race of Hauteville absorbed the heritage of Greeks and Lombards and Saracens in Southern Italy, these adventurers succeeded in annexing Amalfi. But it was not their interest to extinguish the state. On the contrary, they relied for assistance upon the navies and the armies of the little commonwealth. New powers had meanwhile arisen in the North of Italy, who were jealous of rivalry upon the open seas; and when the Neapolitans resisted King Roger in 1135, they called Pisa to their aid, and sent her fleet to destroy Amalfi.

The ships of Amalfi were on guard with Roger's navy in the Bay of Naples. The armed citizens were, under Roger's orders, at Aversa. Meanwhile the home of the republic lay defenceless on its mountain-girdled seaboard. The Pisans sailed into the harbor, sacked the city, and carried off the famous Pandects of Justinian as a trophy. Two years later they returned, to complete the work of devastation. Amalfi never recovered from the injuries and the humiliation of these two attacks. It was ever thus that the Italians, like the children of the dragon's teeth which Cadmus sowed, consumed each other. Pisa cut the throat of her sister-port Amalfi, and Genoa gave a mortal wound to Pisa, when the waters of Meloria were dyed with blood in 1284. Venice fought a duel to the death with Genoa in the succeeding century; and what Venice failed to accomplish was completed by Milan and the lords of the Visconti dynasty, who crippled and enslaved the haughty queen of the Ligurian Riviera.

The naval and commercial prosperity of Amalfi was thus put an end to by the Pisans in the twelfth century. But it was not then that the town assumed its present aspect. What surprises the student of history more than anything is the total absence of fortifications, docks, arsenals, and breakwaters, bearing witness to the ancient grandeur of a city which numbered fifty thousand inhabitants, and traded with Alexandria, Syria, and the far East. Nothing of the sort, with the exception of a single solitary tower upon the Monte Aureo, is visible. Nor will he fail to remember that Amalfi and Atrani, which are now divided by a jutting mountain buttress, were once joined by a tract of sea-beach, where the galleys of the republic rested after sweeping the Levant, and where the fishermen drew up their boats upon the smooth gray sand. That also has disappeared. The violence of man was not enough to reduce Amalfi to its present state of insignificance. The forces of nature aided—partly by the gradual

subsidence of the land, which caused the lower quarters of the city to be submerged, and separated Amalfi from her twin-port by covering the beach with water—partly by a fearful tempest, accompanied by earthquake, in 1343. Petrarch, then resident at Naples, witnessed the destructive fury of this great convulsion, and the description he wrote of it soon after its occurrence is so graphic that some notice may well be taken of it here.

His letter, addressed to the noble Roman Giovanni Colonna, begins with a promise to tell something of a storm which deserved the title of "poetic," and in a degree so superlative that no epithet but "Homeric" would suffice to do it justice. This exordium is singularly characteristic of Petrarch, who never forgot that he was a literary man, and lost no opportunity of dragging the great names of antiquity into his rhetorical compositions. The catastrophe was hardly unexpected; for it had been prophesied by an astrological bishop, whom Petrarch does not name, that Naples would be overwhelmed by a terrible disaster in December, 1343. The people were, therefore, in a state of wild anxiety, repenting of their sins, planning a total change of life under the fear of imminent death, and neglecting their ordinary occupations. On the day of the predicted calamity women roamed in trembling crowds through the streets, pressing their babies to their breasts, and besieging the altars of the saints with prayers. Petrarch, who shared the general disquietude, kept watching the signs of the weather; but nothing happened to warrant an extraordinary panic. At sunset the sky was quieter than usual; and he could discern none of the symptoms of approaching tempest, to which his familiarity with the mountains of Vacluse accustomed him. After dusk he stationed himself at a window to observe the moon until she went down, before midnight, obscured by clouds. Then he betook himself to bed; but scarcely had he fallen into his first sleep when a most horri-

ble noise aroused him. The whole house shook; the night-light on his table was extinguished; and he was thrown with violence from his couch. He was lodging in a convent; and soon after this first intimation of the tempest he heard the monks calling to each other through the darkness. From cell to cell they hurried, the ghastly gleams of lightning falling on their terror-stricken faces. Headed by the Prior, and holding crosses and relics of the saints in their hands, they now assembled in Petrarch's chamber. Thence they proceeded in a body to the chapel, where they spent the night in prayer and expectation of impending ruin. It would be impossible, says the poet, to relate the terrors of that hellish night—the deluges of rain, the screaming of the wind, the earthquake, the thunder, the howling of the sea, and the shrieks of agonizing human beings. All these horrors were prolonged, as though by some magician's spell, for what seemed twice the duration of a natural night. It was so dark that at last by conjecture rather than the testimony of their senses they knew that day had broken. A hurried mass was said. Then, as the noise in the town above them began to diminish, and a confused clamor from the sea-shore continually increased, their suspense became unendurable. They mounted their horses, and descended to the port—to see and perish. A fearful spectacle awaited them. The ships in the harbor had broken their moorings, and were crashing helplessly together. The strand was strewn with mutilated corpses. The breakwaters were submerged, and the sea seemed gaining momentarily upon the solid land. A thousand watery mountains surged up into the sky between the shore and Capri; and these massive billows were not black or purple, but hoary with a livid foam. After describing some picturesque episodes—such as the gathering of the knights of Naples to watch the ruin of their city, the procession of court ladies headed by the queen to implore the intercession of Mary, and the wreck of a vessel freighted

with four hundred convicts bound for Sicily—Petrarch concludes with a fervent prayer that he may never have to tempt the sea, of whose fury he had seen so awful an example.

The capital on this occasion escaped the ruin prophesied. But Amalfi was inundated; and what the waters then gained has never been restored to man. This is why the once so famous city ranks now upon a level with quiet little towns whose names are hardly heard in history—with San Remo or Rapallo or Chiavari—and yet it is still as full of life as a wasp's nest, especially upon the molo, or raised piazza paved with bricks, in front of the Albergo de' Cappuccini. The changes of scene upon this tiny square are so frequent as to remind one of a theatre. Looking down from the inn-balcony, between the glazy green pots gay with scarlet amaryllis-bloom, we are inclined to fancy that the whole has been prepared for our amusement. In the morning the corn for the macaroni-flour, after being washed, is spread out on the bricks to dry. In the afternoon the fishermen bring their nets for the same purpose. In the evening the city magnates promenade and whisper. Dark-eyed women, with orange or crimson kerchiefs for head-gear, cross and recross, bearing baskets on their shoulders. Great, lazy, large-limbed fellows, girt with scarlet sashes and finished off with dark-blue nightcaps (for a contrast to their saffron-colored shirts, white breeches, and sunburnt calves), slouch about or sleep face downward on the parapets. On either side of this same molo stretches a miniature beach of sand and pebble, covered with nets, which the fishermen are always mending, and where the big boats lade or unlade, trimming for the sardine fishery, or driving in to shore with a whirr of oars and a jabber of discordant voices. As the land-wind freshens, you may watch them set off one by one, like pigeons taking flight, till the sea is flecked with twenty sail all scudding in the same direction. The torrent runs beneath the molo, and finds the sea beyond it; so

that here, too, are the washerwomen, chattering like sparrows; and everywhere the naked boys, like brown sea-urchins, burrow in the clean warm sand, or splash the shallow brine. If you like the fun, you may get a score of them to dive together and scramble for coppers in the deeper places, their lithe bodies gleaming wan beneath the water in a maze of interlacing arms and legs.

Over the whole busy scene rise the gray hills, soaring into blueness of air-distance, turreted here and there with ruined castles, capped with parti-colored campanili and white convents, and tufted through their whole height with the orange and the emerald of the great tree-spurge, and with the live gold of the blossoming broom. It is difficult to say when this picture is most beautiful—whether in the early morning, when the boats are coming back from their night-toil upon the sea, and along the headlands in the fresh light lie swaths of fleecy mist, betokening a still, hot day; or at noontide, when the houses on the hill stand, tinted pink and yellow, shadowless-like gems, and the great caruba-trees above the tangles of vines and figs are blots upon the steady glare; or at sunset, when violet and rose, reflected from the eastern sky, make all these terraces and peaks translucent with a wondrous glow. The best of all, perhaps, is night, with a full moon hanging high overhead. Who shall describe the silhouettes of boats upon the shore or sleeping on the misty sea? On the horizon lies a dusky film of brownish golden haze, between the moon and the glimmering water; and here and there a lamp or candle burns with a deep red. Then is the time to take a boat and row upon the bay, or, better, to swim out into the waves and trouble the reflections from the steady stars. The mountains, clear and calm, with light-irradiated chasms and hard shadows cast upon the rock, soar up above a city built of alabaster, or sea-foam, or summer clouds. The whole is white and wonderful: no similes suggest an analogue for the lustre, solid and transparent, of Amalfi nestling in moon-

light between the gray-blue sea and lucid hills. Stars stand on all the peaks, and twinkle, or keep gliding, as the boat moves, down the craggy sides. Stars are mirrored on the marble of the sea, until one knows not whether the oar has struck sparks from a star image or has scattered diamonds of phosphorescent brine.

All this reads like a rhapsody; but indeed it is difficult not to be rhapsodical when a May night of Amalfi is in the memory, with the echo of rich baritone voices chanting Neapolitan songs to a mandoline. It is fashionable to complain that these Italian airs are opera-tunes; but this is only another way of saying that the Italian opera is the genuine outgrowth of national melody, and that Weber was not the first, as some German critics have supposed, to string together *Volkslieder* for the stage. Northerners, who have never seen or felt the beauty of the South, talk sad nonsense about the superiority of German over Italian music. It is true that much Italian music is out of place in Northern Europe, where we seem to need more travail of the intellect in art. But the Italians are rightly satisfied with such facile melody and such simple rhythms as harmonize with sea and sky and boon earth sensuously beautiful. "Perchè pensa? Pensando s'invecchia," expresses the same habit of mind as another celebrated saying, "La musica è il lamento dell' amore o la preghiera agli Dei." Whatever may be the value of Italian music, it is in concord with such a scene as Amalfi by moonlight; and he who does not appreciate this, no less than some more artificial combination of sights and sounds in Wagner's theatre at Bayreuth, has scarcely learned the first lesson in the lore of beauty.

There is enough and to spare for all tastes at Amalfi. The student of architecture may spend hours in the cathedral, pondering over its high-built western front, and wondering whether there is more of Moorish or of Gothic in its delicate arcades. The painter may transfer its campanile, glittering like dragon's scales,

to his canvas. The lover of the picturesque will wander through its aisle at mass-time, watching the sunlight play upon those up-turned Southern faces with their ardent eyes; and happy is he who sees young men and maidens on Whit-Sunday crowding round the chancel-rails to catch the marigolds and gillyflowers scattered from baskets which the priest has blessed. Is this a symbol of the Holy Spirit's gifts, or is it some quaint relic of Pagan *sparsiones*? This question, with the memory of Pompeian *graffiti* in our mind, may well suggest itself in Southern Italy, where old and new faiths are so singularly blended. Then there is Ravello on the hills above. The path winds upward between stone walls tufted with maidenhair; and ever nearer grow the mountains, and the sea-line soars into the sky. An Englishman has made his home here in a ruined Moorish villa, with cool colonnaded cloisters and rose-embowered terraces, lending far prospect over rocky hills and olive-girdled villages to Pæstum's plain. The churches of Ravello have rare mosaics and bronze doors and marble pulpits, older perhaps than those of Tuscany, which tempt the archaeologist to ask if Nicholas the Pisan learned his secret here. But who cares to be a sober antiquary at Amalfi? Far pleasanter is it to climb the staircase to the Capuchins, and linger in those caverns of the living rock, and pluck the lemons hanging by the mossy walls; or to row from cove to cove along the shore, watching the fishes swimming in the deeps beneath, and the medusas spreading their filmy bells; to land upon smooth slabs of rock, where corallines wave to and fro; or to rest on samphire-tufted ledges, when the shadows slant beneath the westering sun.

There is no point in all this landscape which does not make a picture. Painters might even complain that the pictures are too easy and the poetry too facile, just as the musicians find the melodies of this fair land too simple. No effect, carefully sought and

strenuously seized, could enhance the mere beauty of Amalfi bathed in sunlight. You have only on some average summer day to sit down and paint the scene. Little scope is afforded for suggestions of far-away weird thoughts, or for elaborately studied motives. Daubigny and Corot are as alien here as Blake or Dürer.

What is wanted, and what no modern artist can successfully recapture from the wasteful past, is the mythopœic sense—the apprehension of primeval powers akin to man, growing into shape and substance on the borderland between the world and the keen human sympathies it stirs in us. Greek mythology was the proper form of art for scenery like this. It gave the final touch to all its beauties, and added to its sensuous charm an inbreathed spiritual life. No exercise of the poetic faculty, far less that metaphysical mood of the reflective consciousness which “leads from nature up to nature’s God,” can now supply this need. From sea and earth and sky, in those creative ages when the world was young, there leaned to greet the men whose fancy made them, forms imagined and yet real—human, divine—the archetypes and everlasting patterns of man’s deepest sense of what is wonderful in nature. Feeling them there, forever there, inalienable, ready to start forth and greet successive generations—as the Hamadryad greeted Rhaicos from his father’s oak—those mythopoets called them by immortal names. All their pent-up longings, all passions that consume, all aspirations that inflame—the desire for the impossible, which is disease; the day-dreams and visions of the night, which are spontaneous poems—were thus transferred to nature. And nature, responsive to the soul that loves her, gave them back transfigured and translated into radiant beings of like substance with mankind. It was thus, we feel, upon these Southern shores that the gods of Greece came into being. The statues in the temples were the true fine flower of all this beauty, the culmination of the poetry which it evoked in hearts that feel and brains that think.

In Italy, far more than in any other part of Europe, the life of the present is imposed upon the strata of successive past lives. Greek, Latin, Moorish, and mediæval civilizations have arisen, flourished, and decayed on nearly the same soil; and it is common enough to find one city, which may have perished twenty centuries ago, neighbor to another that enjoyed its brief prosperity in the middle of our era. There is not, for example, the least sign of either Greek or Roman at Amalfi. Whatever may have been the glories of the republic in the early Middle Ages, they had no relation to the classic past. Yet a few miles off along the bay rise the ancient Greek temples of Pæstum, from a desert—with no trace of any intervening occupants. Poseidonia was founded in the sixth century before Christ, by colonists from Sybaris. Three centuries later the Hellenic element in this settlement, which must already have become a town of no little importance, was submerged by a deluge of recurrent barbarism. Under the Roman rule it changed its name to Pæstum, and was prosperous. The Saracens destroyed it in the ninth century of our era; and Robert Guiscard carried some of the materials of its buildings to adorn his new town of Salerno. Since then the ancient site has been abandoned to malaria and solitude. The very existence of Pæstum was unknown, except to wandering herdsmen and fishers coasting near its ruined colonnades, until the end of the last century. Yet, strange to relate, after all these revolutions, and in the midst of this total desolation, the only relics of the antique city are three Greek temples, those very temples where the Hellenes, barbarized by their Lucanian neighbors, met to mourn for their lost liberty. It is almost impossible to trace more than the mere circuit of the walls of Poseidonia. Its port, if port it had in Roman days, has disappeared. Its theatre is only just discernible. Still not a column of the great hypæthral temple, built by the Sybarite colonists two thousand and five hundred years ago,

to be a house for Zeus or for Poseidon, has been injured. The accidents that erased far greater cities, like Syracuse, from the surface of the earth—pillage, earthquake, the fury of fanatics, the slow decay of perishable stone, or the lust of palace-builders in the Middle Ages—have spared those three houses of the gods, over whom, in the days of Alexander, the funeral hymn was chanted by the enslaved Hellenes.

"We do the same," said Aristoxenus in his *Convivial Miscellanies*, "as the men of Poseidonia, who dwell on the Tyrrhenian Gulf. It befell them, having been at first true Hellenes, to be utterly barbarized, changing to Tyrrhenes or Romans, and altering their language, together with their other customs. Yet they still observe one Hellenic festival, when they meet together and call to remembrance their old names and bygone institutions; and having lamented one to the other, and shed bitter tears, they afterwards depart to their own homes. Even thus a few of us also; now that our theatres have been barbarized, and this art of music has gone to ruin and vulgarity, meet together and remember what once music was."*

This passage has a strange pathos, considering how it was penned, and how it has come down to us, tossed by the dark, indifferent stream of time. The Aristoxenus who wrote it was a pupil of the Peripatetic school, born at Tarentum, and therefore familiar with the vicissitudes of Magna Græcia. The study of music was his chief preoccupation; and he used this episode in the agony of an enslaved Greek city, to point his own conservative disgust for innovations in an art of which we have no knowledge left. The works of Aristoxenus have perished, and the fragment I have quoted is imbedded in the gossip of Egyptian Athenæus. In this careless fashion has been opened for us, as it were, a little window on a grief now buried in the oblivion of a hun-

* Athenæus, xiv. 632.

dred generations. After reading his words one May morning, beneath the pediment of Pæstum's noblest ruin, I could not refrain from thinking that if the spirits of those captive Hellenes were to revisit their old habitations, they would change their note of wailing into a thin ghostly pæan when they found that Romans and Lucanians had passed away, that Christians and Saracens had left alike no trace behind, while the houses of their own ἀντῆλιοι θεοί—dawn-facing deities—were still abiding in the pride of immemorial strength. Who knows whether buffalo-driver or bandit may not ere now have seen processions of these Poseidonian phantoms, bearing laurels and chanting hymns on the spot where once they fell each on the other's neck to weep? Gathering his cloak around him and cowering closer to his fire of sticks, the night-watcher in those empty colonnades may have mistaken the Hellenic outlines of his shadowy visitants for fevered dreams, and the melody of their evanished music for the whistling of night winds or the cry of owls. So abandoned is Pæstum in its solitude that we know not even what legends may have sprung up round those relics of a mightier age.

The shrine is ruined now ; and far away
To east and west stretch olive-groves, whose shade
Even at the height of summer noon is gray.

Asphodels sprout upon the plinth decayed
Of these low columns, and the snake hath found
Her haunt 'neath altar-steps with weeds o'erlaid.

Yet this was once a hero's temple, crowned
With myrtle-boughs by lovers, and with palm
By wrestlers, resonant with sweetest sound

Of flute and fife in summer evening's calm,
And odorous with incense all the year,
With nard and spice, and galbanum and balm.

These lines sufficiently express the sense of desolation felt at Pæstum, except that the scenery is more solemn and mournful, and the temples are too august to be the shrine of any simple hero. There are no olives. The sea plunges on its sandy shore within the space of half a mile to westward. Far and wide on either hand stretch dreary fever-stricken marshes. The plain is bounded to the north and east and south with mountains, purple, snow-peaked, serrated, and grandly broken like the hills of Greece. Driving over this vast level where the Silarus stagnates, the monotony of the landscape is broken now and then by a group of buffaloes standing up to their dewlaps in reeds, by peasants on horseback, with goads in their hands and muskets slung athwart their backs, or by patrols of Italian soldiers crossing and re-crossing on the brigand-haunted roads. Certain portions have been reclaimed from the swamp, and here may be seen white oxen in herds of fifty grazing; or gangs of women at field-labor, with a man to oversee them, cracking a long hunting-whip; or the mares and foals of a famous stud-farm browsing under spreading pines. There are no villages, and the few farm-houses are so widely scattered as to make us wonder where the herdsmen and field-workers, scanty as they are, can possibly be lodged.

At last the three great temples come in sight. The rich orange of the central building contrasts with the paler yellow of its two companions, while the glowing color of all three is splendidly relieved against green vegetation and blue mountain-flanks. Their material is travertine—a calcareous stone formed by the deposit of petrifying waters, which contains fragments of reeds, spiral shells, and other substances, imbedded in the porous limestone. In the flourishing period of old Poseidonia these travertine columns were coated with stucco, worked to a smooth surface, and brilliantly tinted to harmonize with the gay costumes of a Greek festival. Even now this coating of fine sand, mingled with slaked

lime and water, can be seen in patches on the huge blocks of the masonry. Thus treated, the travertine lacked little of the radiance of marble, for it must be remembered that the Greeks painted even the Pentelic cornice of the Parthenon with red and blue. Nor can we doubt that the general effect of brightness suited the glad and genial conditions of Greek life.

All the surroundings are altered now, and the lover of the picturesque may be truly thankful that the hand of time, by stripping the buildings of this stucco, without impairing their proportions, has substituted a new harmony of tone between the native stone and the surrounding landscape, no less sympathetic to the present solitude than the old symphony of colors was to the animated circumstances of a populous Greek city. In this way those critics who defend the polychrome decorations of the classic architects, and those who contend that they cannot imagine any alteration from the present toning of Greek temples for the better, are both right.

In point of color the Pæstum ruins are very similar to those of Girgenti; but owing to their position on a level plain, in front of a scarcely indented sea-shore, we lack the irregularity which adds so much charm to the row of temples on their broken cliff in the old town of Agrigentum. In like manner the celebrated *asymmetreia* of the buildings of the Athenian Acropolis, which causes so much variety of light and shade upon the temple-fronts, and offers so many novel points of view when they are seen in combination, seems to have been due originally to the exigencies of the ground. At Pæstum, in planning out the city, there can have been no utilitarian reasons for placing the temples at odd angles, either to each other or the shore. Therefore we see them now almost exactly in line and parallel, though at unequal distances. If something of picturesque effect is thus lost at Pæstum through the flatness of the ground, something of impressive grandeur, on

the other hand, is gained by the very regularity with which those phalanxes of massive Doric columns are drawn up to face the sea.

Poseidonia, as the name betokens, was dedicated to the god of the sea; and the coins of the city are stamped with his effigy bearing a trident, and with his sacred animal, the bull. It has therefore been conjectured that the central of the three temples—which was hypæthral and had two entrances, east and west—belonged to Poseidon; and there is something fine in the notion of the god being thus able to pass to and fro from his cella through those sunny peristyles, down to his chariot, yoked with sea-horses, in the brine. Yet hypæthral temples were generally consecrated to Zeus, and it is therefore probable that the traditional name of this vast edifice is wrong. The names of the two other temples, *Tempio di Cerere* and *Basilica*, are wholly unsupported by any proof or probability. The second is almost certainly founded on a mistake; and if we assign the largest of the three shrines to Zeus, one or other of the lesser belonged most likely to Poseidon.

The style of the temples is severe and primitive. In general effect their Doric architecture is far sterner than that adapted by Ictinus to the Parthenon. The entablature seems somewhat disproportioned to the columns and the pediment; and, owing to this cause, there is a general effect of heaviness. The columns, again, are thick-set; nor is the effect of solidity removed by their gradual narrowing from the base upward. The pillars of the *Neptune* are narrowed in a straight line; those of the *Basilica* and *Ceres* by a gentle curve. Study of these buildings, so sublime in their massiveness, so noble in the parsimony of their decoration, so dignified in their employment of the simplest means for the attainment of an indestructible effect of harmony, heightens our admiration for the Attic genius which found in this grand manner of the elder Doric architects resources as yet undeveloped; creating, by slight and subtle alterations of outline, proportion,

and rhythm of parts, what may fairly be classed as a style unique, because exemplified in only one transcendent building.

It is difficult not to return again and again to the beauty of coloring at Pæstum. Lying basking in the sun upon a flat slab of stone, and gazing eastward, we overlook a foreground of dappled light and shadow, across which the lizards run—quick streaks of living emerald—making the bunches of yellow rue and little white serpyllum in the fissures of the masonry nod as they hurry past. Then come two stationary columns, built, it seems, of solid gold, where the sunbeams strike along their russet surface. Between them lies the landscape, a medley first of brakefern and asphodel and feathering acanthus and blue spikes of bugloss; then a white farm in the middle distance, roofed with the reddest tiles and sheltered by a velvety umbrella pine. Beyond and above the farm, a glimpse of mountains purple almost to indigo with cloud shadows, and flecked with snow. Still higher—but for this we have to raise our head a little—the free heavens enclosed within the framework of the tawny travertine, across which sail hawks and flutter jackdaws, sharply cut against the solid sky. Down from the architrave, to make the vignette perfect, hang tufts of crimson snapdragons. Each opening in the peristyle gives a fresh picture.

The temples are overgrown with snapdragons and mallows, yellow asters and lilac gillyflowers, white allium and wild fig. When a breeze passes, the whole of this many-colored tapestry waves gently to and fro. The fields around are flowery enough; but where are the roses? I suppose no one who has read his Virgil at school crosses the plain from Salerno to Pæstum without those words of the *Georgics* ringing in his ears: *biferique rosaria Pæsti*. They have that wonderful Virgilian charm which, by a touch, transforms mere daily sights and sounds, and adds poetic mystery to common things. The poets of ancient Rome

seem to have felt the magic of this phrase; for Ovid has imitated the line in his *Metamorphoses*, tamely substituting *tepidi* for the suggestive *biferi*, while again in his *Elegies* he uses the same termination with *odorati* for his epithet. Martial sings of *Pæstanæ rosæ* and *Pæstani gloria ruris*. Even Ausonius, at the very end of Latin literature, draws from the rosaries of Pæstum a pretty picture of beauty doomed to premature decline:

Vidi Pæstano gaudere rosaria cultu
Exoriente novo roscida Lucifero.

"I have watched the rose-beds that luxuriate on Pæstum's well-tilled soil, all dewy in the young light of the rising dawn-star."

What a place, indeed, was this for a rose-garden, spreading far and wide along the fertile plain, with its deep loam reclaimed from swamps and irrigated by the passing of perpetual streams! But where are the roses now? As well ask, *où sont les neiges d'autan?*

We left Amalfi for Capri in the freshness of an early morning at the end of May. As we stepped into our six-oared boat the sun rose above the horizon, flooding the sea with gold and flashing on the terraces above Amalfi. High up along the mountains hung pearly and empurpled mists, set like resting-places between a world too beautiful and heaven too far for mortal feet. Not a breath of any wind was stirring. The water heaved with a scarcely perceptible swell, and the vapors lifted gradually as the sun's rays grew in power. Here the hills descend abruptly on the sea, ending in cliffs where light reflected from the water dances. Huge caverns open in the limestone; on their edges hang stalactites like beards, and the sea within sleeps dark as night. For some of these caves the maidenhair fern makes a shadowy curtain; and all of them might be the home of Proteus, or of Calypso, by whose side her mortal lover passed his nights in vain homesickness:

ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι παρ' οὐκ ἰθίλων ἰθελούσῃ.

This is a truly Odyssean journey. Soon the islands of the Sirens come in sight—bare bluffs of rock, shaped like galleys taking flight for the broad sea. As we row past in this ambrosial weather, the oarsmen keeping time and ploughing furrows in the fruitless fields of Nereus, it is not difficult to hear the siren voices—for earth and heaven and sea make melodies far above mortal singing. The water round the Galli—so the islands are now called, as antiquaries tell us, from an ancient fortress named Guallo—is very deep, and not a sign of habitation is to be seen upon them. In bygone ages they were used as prisons; and many doges of Amalfi languished their lives away upon those shadeless stones, watching the sea around them blaze like a burnished shield at noon, and the peaks of Capri deepen into purple when the west was glowing after sunset with the rose and daffodil of Southern twilight.

The end of the Sorrentine promontory, Point Campanella, is absolutely barren—gray limestone, with the scantiest overgrowth of rosemary and myrtle. A more desolate spot can hardly be imagined. But now the morning breeze springs up behind; sails are hoisted, and the boatmen ship their oars. Under the albatross wings of our lateen sails we scud across the freshening waves. The precipice of Capri soars against the sky, and the Bay of Naples expands before us with those sweeping curves and azure amplitude that all the poets of the world have sung. Even thus the mariners of ancient Hellas rounded this headland when the world was young. Rightly they named yon rising ground, beneath Vesuvius, Posilippo—rest from grief. Even now, after all those centuries of toil, though the mild mountain has been turned into a mouth of murderous fire, though Roman emperors and Spanish despots have done their worst to mar what nature made so perfect, we may here lay down the burden of our cares, gaining tranquillity by no mysterious lustral rites, no penitential

prayers or offerings of holocausts, but by the influence of beauty in the earth and air, and by sympathy with a people unspoiled in their healthful life of labor alternating with simple joy.

The last hour of the voyage was beguiled by stories of our boatmen, some of whom had seen service on distant seas, while others could tell of risks on shore and love adventures. They showed us how the tunny-nets were set, and described the solitary life of the tunny-watchers, in their open boats, waiting to spear the monsters of the deep entangled in the chambers made for them beneath the waves. How much of Æschylean imagery, I reflected, is drawn from this old fisher's art—the toils of Clytemnestra and the tragedy of Psyttaleia rising to my mind. One of the crew had his little son with him, a child of six years old; and when the boy was restless, his father spoke of Barbarossa and Timberio (*sic*) to keep him quiet; for the memory of the Moorish pirate and the mighty emperor is still alive here. The people of Capri are as familiar with Tiberius as the Bretons with King Arthur; and the hoof-mark of illustrious crime is stamped upon the island.

Capri offers another example of the versatility of Southern Italy. If Amalfi brings back to us the naval and commercial prosperity of the early Middle Ages; if Pæstum remains a monument of the oldest Hellenic civilization, Capri, at a few miles' distance, is dedicated to the Roman emperor who made it his favorite residence, when, life-weary with the world and all its shows, he turned these many peaks and slumbering caves into a summer palace for the nursing of his brain-sick phantasy. Already, on landing, we are led to remember that from this shore was loosed the galley bearing that great letter—*verbosa et grandis epistola*—which undid Sejanus and shook Rome. Riding to Ana-Capri and the Salto di Tiberio, exploring the remains of his favorite twelve villas, and gliding over the smooth waters paved with the white

marbles of his baths, we are forever attended by the same forbidding spectre. Here, perchance, were the *sedes arcanarum libidinum* whereof Suetonius speaks; the Spintrian medals, found in these recesses, still bear witness that the biographer trusted no mere fables for the picture he has drawn. Here, too, below the Villa Jovis, gazing seven hundred feet sheer down into the waves, we tread the very parapet whence fell the victims of that maniac lust for blood. "After long and exquisite torments," says the Roman writer, "he ordered condemned prisoners to be cast into the sea before his eyes; marines were stationed near to pound the fallen corpses with poles and oars, lest haply breath should linger in their limbs." The Neapolitan Museum contains a little bass-relief representing Tiberius, with the well-known features of the Claudian house, seated astride upon a donkey, with a girl before him. A slave is leading the beast and its burden to a terminal statue under an olive-tree. This curious relic, discovered some while since at Capri, haunted my fancy as I climbed the olive-planted slopes to his high villa on the Arx Tiberii. It is some relief, amid so much that is tragic in the associations of this place, to have the horrible Tiberius burlesqued and brought into donkey-riding relation with the tourist of to-day. And what an ironical revenge of time it is that his famous Salto should be turned into a restaurant, where the girls dance tarantella for a few coppers; that a toothless hermit should occupy a cell upon the very summit of his Villa Jovis; and that the Englishwoman's comfortable hotel should be called *Timberio* by the natives! A spiritualist might well believe that the emperor's ghost was forced to haunt the island, and to expiate his old atrocities by gazing on these modern vulgarisms.

Few problems suggested by history are more darkly fascinating than the madness of despots; and of this madness, whether inherent in their blood or encouraged by the circumstance of ab-

solite autocracy, the emperors of the Claudian and Julian houses furnish the most memorable instance.* It is this that renders Tiberius ever present to our memory at Capri. Nor will the student of Suetonius forget his even more memorable grand-nephew Caligula. The following passage is an episode from the biography of that imperial maniac, whose portrait in green basalt, with the strain of dire mental tension on the forehead, is still so beautiful that we are able at this distance of time to pity more than loathe him. "Above all, he was tormented with nervous irritation, by sleeplessness; for he enjoyed not more than three hours of nocturnal repose, nor even these in pure untroubled rest, but agitated by phantasmata of portentous augury; as, for example, upon one occasion, among other spectral visions, he fancied that he saw the sea, under some definite impersonation, conversing with himself. Hence it was, and from this incapacity of sleeping, and from weariness of lying awake, that he had fallen into habits of ranging all night long through the palace, sometimes throwing himself on a couch, sometimes wandering along the vast corridors, watching for the earliest dawn, and anxiously wishing its approach." Those corridors, or loggie, where Caligula spent his wakeful hours, opened perchance upon this Bay of Naples, if not upon the sea-waves of his favorite Porto d'Anzio; for we know that one of his great follies was a palace built above the sea on piles at Baïæ; and where else could *Pelagus*, with his cold azure eyes and briny locks, have more appropriately terrified his sleep with prophecy conveyed in dreams? The very nature of this vision, selected for such special comment by Suetonius as to show that it had troubled Caligula profoundly, proves the fantastic nature of the man, and justifies the hypothesis of insanity.

* De Quincey, in his essay on *The Cæsars*, has worked out this subject with such artistic vividness that no more need be said. From his pages I have quoted the paraphrastic version of Suetonius that follows.

But it is time to shake off the burden of the past. Only students, carrying superfluity of culture in their knapsacks, will ponder over the imperial lunatics who made Capri and Baiæ fashionable in the days of ancient Rome. Neither Tiberius nor Caligula, nor yet Ferdinand of Aragon or Bomba, for that matter, has been able to leave trace of vice or scar of crime on nature in this Eden. A row round the island, or a supper-party in the loggia above the sea at sunset-time is no less charming now, in spite of Roman or Spanish memories, than when the world was young.

Sea-mists are frequent in the early summer mornings, swathing the cliffs of Capri in impenetrable wool and brooding on the perfectly smooth water till the day-wind rises. Then they disappear like magic, rolling in smoke-wreaths from the surface of the sea, condensing into clouds and climbing the hill-sides like Oceanides in quest of Prometheus, or taking their station on the watch-towers of the world, as in the chorus of the *Nephelai*. Such a morning may be chosen for the *giro* of the island. The blue grotto loses nothing of its beauty, but rather gains by contrast, when passing from dense fog you find yourself transported to a world of wavering subaqueous sheen. It is only through the opening of the very topmost arch that a boat can glide into this cavern; the arch itself spreads downward through the water, so that all the light is transmitted from beneath and colored by the sea. The grotto is domed in many chambers; and the water is so clear that you can see the bottom, silvery, with black-finned fishes diapered upon the blue-white sand. The flesh of a diver in this water showed like the faces of children playing at snapdragon; all around him the spray leaped up with living fire; and when the oars struck the surface, it was as though a phosphorescent sea had been smitten, and the drops ran from the blades in blue pearls. I have only once seen anything (outside the magic world of a pantomime) to equal these effects of blue and silver; and that was

when I made my way into an ice-cave in the Great Aletsch glacier—not an artificial gallery such as they cut at Grindelwald, but a natural cavern, arched, hollowed into fanciful recesses, and hung with stalactites of pendent ice. The difference between the glacier-cavern and the sea-grotto, was that in the former all the light was transmitted through transparent sides, so that the whole was one uniform azure, except in rare places where little chinks opened upward to the air, and the light of day came glancing with a roseate flush. In the latter the light sent from beneath through the water played upon a roof of rock; reflections intermingled with translucence; and a greater variety of light and shadow compensated the lack of that strange sense of being shut within a solid gem.

Numberless are the caves at Capri. The so-called green grotto has the beauty of moss-agate in its liquid floor; the red grotto shows a warmer chord of color; and where there is no other charm to notice, endless beauty may be found in the play of sunlight upon roofs of limestone, tinted with yellow, orange, and pale pink, mossed over, hung with fern, and catching tones of blue or green from the still deeps beneath.

Sheets of water, wherever found, are the most subtle heighteners of color. To those who are familiar with Venetian or Mantuan sunsets, who have seen the flocks of flamingoes reflected on the lagoons of Tunis, or who have watched stormy red flakes tossed from crest to crest of great Atlantic waves on our own coasts, this need hardly be said. Yet I cannot leave this beauty of the sea at Capri without touching on a melodrama of light and color I once saw at Castellamare. It was a festa-night, when the people sent up rockets and fireworks of every hue from the harbor breakwater. The surf rolled shoreward like a bath of molten metals, all confused of blue and red and green and gold—dying dolphin tints that burned strangely beneath the purple

skies and tranquil stars. Boats at sea hung out their crimson cressets, flickering in long lines on the bay; and larger craft moved slowly with rows of lamps defining their curves; while the full moon shed over all her "vitreous pour, just tinged with blue." To some tastes this mingling of natural and artificial effects would seem unworthy of sober notice; but I confess to having enjoyed it with childish eagerness like music never to be forgotten.

After a day upon the water it is pleasant to rest at sunset in the loggia above the sea. The Bay of Naples stretches far and wide in front, beautiful by reason chiefly of the long fine line descending from Vesuvius, dipping almost to a level and then gliding up to join the highlands of the north. Now sun and moon begin to mingle—waning and waxing splendors. The cliffs above our heads are still blushing a deep flame-color, like the heart of some tea-rose; when lo, the touch of the huntress is laid upon those eastern pinnacles, and the horizon glimmers with her rising. Was it on such a night that Ferdinand of Aragon fled from his capital before the French, with eyes turned ever to the land he loved, chanting, as he leaned from his galley's stern, that melancholy psalm—"Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain"—and seeing Naples dwindle to a white blot on the purple shore?

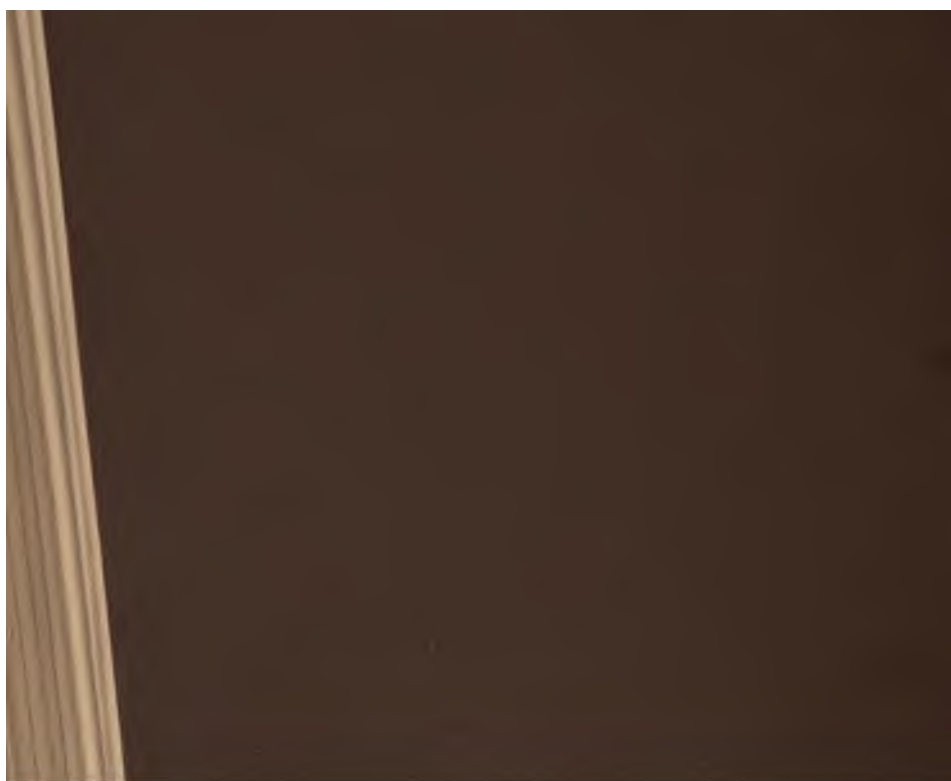
Our journey takes the opposite direction. Farewell to Capri, welcome to Sorrento! The roads are sweet with scent of acacia and orange-flowers. When you walk in a garden at night, the white specks beneath your feet are fallen petals of lemon-blossoms. Over the walls hang cataracts of roses, honey-pale clusters of the Banksia rose, and pink bushes of the China rose, growing as we never see them grow with us. The gray rocks wave with gladiolus—feathers of crimson, set amid tufts of rosemary and myrtle and tree-spurge. In the clefts of the sandstone, and be-

hind the orchard walls, sleeps a dark green night of foliage, in the midst of which gleam globed oranges, and lemons dropping like great pearls of palest amber dew. It is difficult to believe that the lemons have not grown into length by their own weight, as though mere hanging on the bough prevented them from being round—so waxen are they. Overhead soar stone-pines—a roof of sombre green, a lattice-work of strong red branches, through which the moon peers wonderfully. One part of this marvellous *piano* is bare rock tufted with keen-scented herbs, and sparsely grown with locust-trees and olives. Another waves from sea to summit with beech-copses and oak-woods, as verdant as the most abundant English valley. Another region turns its hoary raiment of olive-gardens to the sun and sea, or flourishes with fig and vine. Everywhere the houses of men are dazzling white, perched on natural coigns of vantage, clustered on the brink of brown cliffs, nestling under mountain eaves, or piled up from the sea-beach in ascending tiers, until the broad knees of the hills are reached, and great Pan, the genius of solitude in nature, takes unto himself a region yet untenanted by man. The occupations of the sea and land are blended together on this shore; and the people are both blithe and gentle. It is true that their passions are upon the surface, and that the knife is ready to their hand. But the combination of fierceness and softness in them has an infinite charm when one has learned by observation that their lives are laborious and frugal, and that their honesty is hardly less than their vigor. Happy, indeed, are they—so happy that, but for crimes accumulated through successive generations by bad governors, and but for superstitions cankering the soul within, they might deserve what Shelley wrote of his imagined island in *Epipsychidion*.











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